



## **Delivery and Collection of Children**

### **1. Authorisation**

This policy was adopted by the Committee of Armadale Early Learning Centre Inc., at its Committee meeting on 2nd December 1997.

### **2. Review Date**

This policy was last reviewed [June 2012](#) and is to be reviewed every 3 years, or when deemed necessary. This policy is next due to be reviewed [March 2015](#).

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all parents/guardians, the Committee, staff, volunteers and students working within Armadale Early Learning Centre.

### **4. Background and Legislations**

#### **Duty of Care**

A duty of care exists at all times the child is in the care of the children's service. It also exists when the child is given into the care of the service and released from the service into the care of another person.

#### **Supervision of children**

Parents/guardians or other authorised person are responsible for the supervision of their child/ren from their arrival at the centre, until they have entered the time of arrival and signed the attendance book.

On collection, the parents/guardians or authorised person are responsible for their child/ren once they have entered the time of departure, signed the attendance book and collected the child/ren from their group.

Despite clearly defining in this policy when the supervision of their child is the responsibility of the parents/guardians or other authorised person, the committee/staff must accept a level of responsibility while the parents/guardians or other authorised person and the child are on the premises, including the playground. Therefore, it would not be advisable for the committee and staff to ignore any situation in which the child could be at risk, even though this policy defines the supervision of the child as the responsibility of the parents/guardians or other authorised person.

### **Collection from the centre**

The committee and staff have a duty of care in relation to each child. This duty of care also exists when the child is collected from the centre. If the staff or committee does not hand over a child to a person who has the joint or sole responsibility for the day-to-day care and control of a child, or an authorised person on the child's enrolment form, this could lead to legal action against the centre. Conversely, if the centre was to release a child to someone whom the centre ought reasonably to have known did not have the required responsibility for the child; the centre may be held legally responsible for any consequences. (Refer to the Victorian Legal Aid/DHS 1999 publication *Legal Aspects of Child Care*).

### **Legislation**

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- *Children's Services Act 1996*
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*
- *Family Law Act 1995*
- Children's Services Regulations 2009 (CSR).

## **5. Definitions**

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Attendance Book:         | The book provided by the proprietor for the person who delivers and collects the child from the service, to sign and record the time of arrival and departure of each child being cared for or educated by the service. A staff member may also sign this book. <i>Program</i> : The course/activity in which a child is enrolled and which has specific hours of attendance. |
| Authorised Person:       | A person for whom the parent/guardian has given written authority to the service to collect the child.  |
| Collection of the child: | Collection of the child from the service occurs once the parent/guardian has entered the time and signed the attendance book prior to their departure with the child from the premises or when the parent/guardian or carer leaves the premises with the child.   |
| Delivery:                | Delivery of the child at the service begins once the child and parent/guardian or carer arrive on the premises and  |
| DHS:                     | Department of Human Services  |

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Guardian:                 | A person who has been given lawful authority by a court order. The definition of guardian under the <i>Children's Services Act 1996</i> also includes a person who has custody (day-to-day care) or control of the child (but does not include the person providing children's services to a child).  |
| Late Collection:          | When a parent/guardian or authorised person collects their child/children from the program after the designated time for the program to end.  |
| Late Collection Fee:      | A fee imposed by the Committee when a parent is continuously late to collect their child from the program in which they are participating.  |
| Lawful authority:         | All parents have powers and responsibilities in relation to their children that can only be changed by a court order. The Children's Services Regulations refer to these powers and responsibilities as 'lawful authority'. 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 <i>Family Law Act</i> , may take away the authority of a parent to do something or may give it to another person. A guardian of a child also has lawful authority. |
| Licensee Representatives: | Members of the Committee who have been police checked and assessed as 'fit and proper persons' under the Children's Services Regulations 1998.  |
| Qualified staff:          | A staff member who is a teaching staff member or has successfully completed a two-year full-time, or part-time equivalent, post-secondary approved early childhood qualification, or an approved qualification that is substantially equivalent or superior to that qualification.  |

## **6. Policy**

### **6.1 Values**

The Armadale Early Learning Centre is committed to:

- Ensuring the safe delivery and collection of children being cared for or educated at the centre
- Fulfilling a duty of care to all children
- Providing a welcoming environment to children and families
- Encouraging families to deliver and collect their child/ren on time from the programs in which they are participating

- Recouping all additional costs incurred due to the late collection of a child by the imposition of a late-collection fee on their parents/guardians
- Complying with all legislative requirements.

## **6.2 Purpose**

This policy will provide clear guidelines to ensure the safe delivery and collection of children at Armadale Early Learning Centre.

## **7. Procedures**

### **7.1 Delivery of the child to the Centre**

An attendance book will be provided in which parents/guardians or carers will sign in their child/children on their delivery to the Centre and list the time of delivery.

The staff will complete this task if for any reason the parent/guardian or carer does not complete it.

Once the attendance book has been signed and time of delivery entered by the parent/guardian or carer or the parent/guardian or carer leaves the service, the supervision of children on the premises becomes the responsibility of the staff members at the service.

### **7.2 Collection from the service**

An attendance book will be provided in which parents/guardians or carers will sign out their child/children on their collection from the Centre and list the time of collection.

The staff will complete this task if for any reason the parent/guardian or carer does not complete it.

Once the attendance book has been signed and the time of collection noted, the children's supervision is the responsibility of the parents/guardians or carers while they are still on the premises.

Staff will only release a child to the parent/guardian, or a person authorised to collect the child. If staff are concerned that releasing a child to the parent/guardian, or a person authorised to collect the child, could put the child at risk, they will seek an opinion from another staff member and/or Committee members before making a decision.

### **7.3 Before and after the program**

If parents/guardians or carers and their children are on the premises of the service prior to a program commencing, the supervision of any child will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians or carers.

While parents/guardians or carers and their children are welcome to remain on the premises of the service for a short time after a program has concluded, the supervision of any child will again be the responsibility of the parents/guardians or carers.

Staff will be involved in non-contact duties at the Centre both prior to the program commencing and after its conclusion.

#### **7.4 Responsibility for children who accompany their parents/guardians/carers**

The supervision of children who accompany their parents/guardians or carers, but are not enrolled in the program operating at the service at that time, is the responsibility of the parents/guardians or carers while they are on the premises.

#### **7.5 Procedure in relation to the late collection of a child**

In a situation where the parent/guardian or carer is **continuously late** in collecting their child and has not notified the Centre that they will be late, the staff will:

- Contact the parents/guardians or carer of the child and if they are not available, the other emergency persons authorised to collect the child, requesting that they collect the child.
- If the parents/guardians or carers or emergency persons cannot be contacted, or they are unable to collect the child, or the child will not be collected within the staff's rostered hours, the staff will contact the licensee representatives.
- Continue to attempt to contact the parents/guardians or carers and emergency persons.

In situations where a parent/guardian or carer has not collected their child from the Centre by the end of the staff's rostered hours, the staff will remain on the premises with the child until relieved by licensee representatives. Two adults will remain on the premises with the child at all times.

In a situation where the parent/guardian or carer or emergency persons cannot be contacted by the end of the staff's rostered hours:

- The licensee's representatives and/or staff caring for the child will continue to attempt to contact the parents/guardians or carers and emergency persons. A licensee's representative, or the local police may be requested to visit the parents/guardians or carers address to ascertain if there is a problem/illness.
- The licensee representatives or staff will notify the regional Children's Services Adviser at the DHS of the current situation and procedure being undertaken. If the Children's Services Adviser cannot be contacted, they will document the date, time and reason for the call, and contact the Children's Services Adviser as soon as possible.
- After a period of time determined by the licensees representative in consultation with staff, the licensee representatives or staff member will contact the DHS Child Protection Services stating the Centre is unable to contact parent/guardian or carer or emergency contacts for the child/children. The licensee representatives or the staff will follow the advice given to them by the Child Protection Services. It may be necessary for the committee member to take the child home with them. The name, address and telephone number of the Committee Member will be posted on the front gate.

### **7.6 Late Collection Fee**

It is the responsibility of parent/guardian's to collect their child promptly at the conclusion of the session. The Committee recognises, however, that there may be isolated occasions when parents/guardians may be delayed through no fault of their own. The Committee also has a responsibility for staff who have other tasks to complete after the conclusion of the session and who must be paid if they remain after their rostered finishing time.

Any repeated cases of regular late collection will be reviewed by the committee for further action.

A late collection fee may be applied when the parent/guardian is continuously late in collecting their child. The fee will be based on \$2 for every minute from the conclusion of the session and this will be added to their term account. When the child is collected, the person responsible must sign an invoice stating the time elapsed.

The procedure for the recovery of a late fee is set out in the Centre's Fees Policy.

## **8. Key Responsibilities & Authorities**

### **8.1 The Committee**

The Committee is responsible for:

- Providing parents/guardians with information regarding the procedures for delivery and collection of their children, and a summary of this policy prior to their child/ren's attendance at the centre
- Ensuring that a copy of this policy is available on request and is easily accessible at the centre at all times
- Providing staff with an attendance book that meets the requirements of the CSR r29
- Determining if a late-collection fee is to be charged (refer to the Fees policy)
- Confirming with the staff that DEECD and the parents of the child/ren who left the centre unattended by an adult or with an unauthorised person were contacted (CSR r90)
- Ensuring that gate and exit door handles are inaccessible to children

### **8.2 The Staff**

The staff is responsible for:

- Making the attendance book available for parents/guardians or carers to enter the time children are delivered and the time their children are collected from the Armadale Early Learning Centre.
- Ensuring that the attendance book accurately reflects the attendance of children in the program.

- Signing the attendance book if for any reason it is not completed by the parent/guardian or carer. Staff will monitor the attendance book regularly. This includes immediately prior to the commencement of the program, during the program and after collection of children from the program.
- Making sure that where a late fee could apply, that the time is accurately entered into the attendance book and the reason for the late collection is documented.
- Staying at the service with a child until the child is collected, or a licensee representative relieves them, or the advice from the DHS Protective Services is implemented and the child is no longer at the service.

### **8.3 Parents/guardians**

The parents/guardians or other carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring the child/ren's enrolment form includes details of persons who have lawful authority to collect the child/ren. All parents are to provide two emergency contacts on enrolment (indicating relationship to the child).
- All parents are required to sign a permission slip allowing nominated committee members to take their child to their home if the child can not be collected by a parent/guardian/ carer or any persons nominated as an emergency contact.
- Completing the attendance book on arrival and departure as per the requirements of this policy
- Collecting their child/ren on time at the end of the session/day
- Ensuring staff are aware that the child has arrived/or been collected from the centre
- Alerting staff if they are going to be late to collect their child/ren
- Supervising any child in their care if they are in attendance at the centre prior to the commencement or at the conclusion of the
- Supervising any child in their care once they have been signed out in the attendance book
- Supervising any child/ren who are not enrolled in the program operating at that time, such as siblings of the child enrolled in the program
- Paying the late-collection fine as outlined in the centre's Fees policy

## **9. Circulation Plan**

Who needs to know the policy and procedures exists?

- Parents whose children attend the AELC
- Staff and Committee members

## 9.1 Method

A copy of the Policy will be adopted by the Committee and will be available upon request, in the Policy Manual (located in the AELC foyer), and available on the AELC website [www.armadaleelc.vic.edu.au](http://www.armadaleelc.vic.edu.au).

## 10. Resources and Support

### 10.1 Sources

- DEECD, Children's Services Practice Notes: Delivery and collection of children
- Victorian Legal Aid and DHS 1999, *Legal Aspects of Child Care: A Guide for Workers in Child Care Centres, Preschools and Parents* (6th edition)

### 10.2 Centre policies

- Enrolment
- Fees
- Privacy

## 11. Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes set out under Section 6, the Committee will:

- If appropriate, conduct a survey in relation to this policy or incorporate relevant questions within the general parent/guardian survey.
- Take into consideration feedback regarding the policy from staff, parents/guardians and Committee members.
- Monitor complaints and incidents regarding the policy.

| Date Reviewed | Details of Changes (if any)     | Date of Next Review |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| August 2000   | Reviewed and updated            |                     |
| August 2003   | Reviewed and updated            |                     |
| May 2006      | Reviewed and updated            |                     |
| June 2006     | Reviewed and updated            |                     |
| March 2012    | Reviewed, formatted and updated | March 2015          |



## Armadale Early Learning Centre Permission Slip

All parents on enrolment to sign a permission slip allowing nominated committee member to take the child to their home in an event of an emergency.

*I/We ..... have read the Armadale Early Learning Centre Delivery and Collection of Children Policy and understand that it is my/our responsibility to collect ..... (child's name) at the end of their session.*

*I/We also give permission, in a case of emergency, when I/We and/or the emergency contacts are unreachable and our child has not been collected after the session after a reasonable period of time at the discretion of the teacher, for the nominated committee member to take my child to their home.*

Signature: ..... Date: .....

**Note: The names of the nominated Committee members, who are eligible to take a child home under these circumstances, will be posted on the notice board at the Centre.**