



ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF CHILDREN POLICY

SUB CATEGORY: Health, Hygiene and Safety

POLICY GOAL

To ensure the safety and well-being of each child when transferring responsibility and care for the child to and from the education and care service and a parent/guardian or authorised collector.

RATIONALE

The arrival and departure of children at Montessori International College (MIC) are important times where educators and families have the opportunity to share relevant information about the child's learning, medical and other needs. It should be a relaxed time where children and families feel welcome and supported. It is also a time where attention needs to be paid to the documentation required during these times including, but not limited to;

- Attendance records
- Records of sleep, rest, toileting and meals
- Medication
- Incident, accident, trauma and illness records
- Children's learning, interests and developmental milestones
- MIC policy information

Relevant definitions from the Guide to the National Quality Framework:

"Parent: *in relation to a child, includes:*

- *a guardian of the child*
- *a person who has parental responsibility for the child under a decision or order of a court (National Law).*

Parenting order: *A parenting order within the meaning of section 64B(1) of the Family Law Act 1975 (Commonwealth).*

Parenting plan: *A parenting plan within the meaning of section 63C(1) of the Family Law Act 1975 (Commonwealth) and includes a registered parenting plan within the meaning of section 63C(6) of that Act."*¹

"157 Access for parents

- (1) *The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that a parent of a child being educated and cared for by the service may enter the education and care service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for by the service.*
- (2) *The nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that a parent of a child being educated and cared for by the service may enter the education and care service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for by the service.*

¹ "Guide to the National Quality Framework" Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority Jan 2020

- (3) *A family day care educator must not prevent a parent of a child being educated and cared for by the educator*
- (4) *Despite subregulations (1) to (3), the approved provider, nominated supervisor or family day care educator is not required to allow a parent to enter the education and care service premises if—*
 - (a) *permitting the parent's entry would—*
 - (i) *pose a risk to the safety of the children and staff of the education and care service; or*
 - (ii) *conflict with any duty of the provider, supervisor or educator under the Law; or*
 - (b) *the provider, supervisor or family day care educator reasonably believes that permitting the parent's entry would contravene a court order.*

158 Children's attendance record to be kept by approved provider

(1) The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that a record of attendance is kept for the service that—

- (a) records the full name of each child attending the service; and*
- (b) records the date and time each child arrives and departs; and*
- (c) is signed by one of the following persons at the time that the child arrives and departs—*
 - (i) the person who delivers the child to the education and care service premises or collects the child from the education and care service premises;²*

Collection of children

Regulations 99, 161 National Law sections 165, 167

"The approved provider, nominated supervisor and family day care educator must make sure that a child being educated and cared for by the service does not leave the premises except where the child:

- is given into the care of a parent, an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record or a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee, or*
- leaves in accordance with the written authorisation of the child's parent or authorised nominee, or*
- is taken on an excursion with written authorisation from a parent or authorised nominee, or*
- is given into the care of a person or taken outside the premises because the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or treatment, or because of another emergency.*

'Parent' includes a guardian of the child and a person who has parental responsibility for a child under a decision or order of a court. It does not include a parent prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child. An approved provider can restrict a nominated person from collecting a child, for example if the service's policy does not allow children to be collected by a person under 16 of age. Where authorised officers are concerned there may be non-compliance with this requirement, they should consider the policies and procedures in place at the service in relation to the delivery and collection of children, and the acceptance and refusal of authorisations required under regulation 168. This can assist the authorised officer determine whether the problem relates to implementing good practice, or whether there are broader issues with awareness and understanding of the requirement."

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² "Education and Care Services National Regulations", Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (Version Dec 2019)

³ "Guide to the National Quality Framework" Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority Jan 2020

For the administration of CCB/CCR (prior to July 2018) and for CCS (post July 2018) Approved Providers must meet requirements of Family Assistance Law and the Provider Handbook. Specifically;

“To maintain approval, providers must keep certain records and notify the Department of Education and Training of certain events. Failure to keep these records and provide the required notifications can result in suspension or cancellation of provider or service approvals, or other penalties.

Providers must keep and maintain the following records:

- *record of attendance for each child to whom care is provided (regardless of eligibility for the Child Care Subsidy and/or Additional Child Care Subsidy, including records of any absences from care)¹⁴*

MIC Orientation for the Early Learning Classrooms

- *An orientation visit before your child starts at MIC will give them a chance to explore their new environment with their classroom Guide.*
- *They can begin to develop a relationship with the classroom Guide and educators, meet other children at the service and participate in some introductory Montessori lessons with the security that you are close by. Familiarising your child with the MIC setting will be a huge help to them.*
- *Through the orientation visit, you will be provided the opportunity to discuss your child's interests, routines and rituals with the educators.*
- *The orientation session allows you to prepare your child for their first day, ask questions and complete the 'All about me' form. You will be provided with a list of items you will need to ensure your child brings each day.*
- *If possible, prepare to be available to collect your child early over the first few days. Starting with shorter or fewer days then gradually increasing their time at MIC, allows the transition and orientation process to cater to your child's individual needs.*
- *Orientation sessions are a great opportunity to speak with your Early Learning Guide about your own anxieties. If you're anxious, worried and feel emotional about your child starting the early learning journey, your child will likely pick up on this feeling and associate it with the MIC learning environment. Let us know if you're feeling anxious or overwhelmed and we can suggest some strategies that may help.*
- *Remember to say 'goodbye' confidently and reassure your child when you leave that you (or someone else) will be back later to collect them.*

For your peace of mind it can be helpful to call the college later to see how your child settled. Children who become very upset when they are left often settle very quickly and happily once the actual separation is over. The early learning Guides will also keep you updated on Story Park about the first few days, wherever possible.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Early Learning Guides, Educators and families should see arrival and departure times as an opportunity to communicate with families and children and learn more about each child.

¹⁴ *“Child Care Provider Handbook –”* Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (accessed on-line March 2020) <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook>

- Early Learning Guides and Educators must greet every child and their parent/guardian upon arrival at the service and exchange relevant information, this may include finding out about their morning, sleep last night, weekend activities or other recent family events.
- Early Learning Guides and Educators must ensure they greet every parent/guardian and authorised collector at departure and take the time to share information relating to;
 - Records of sleep, rest, toileting and meals if appropriate
 - Medication
 - Any items for collection such as soiled items or medication
 - Incident, accident, trauma and illness records
 - Children's learning, interests and developmental milestones
 - Any other relevant information
- Rosters and routines should ensure that groupings in the early morning and afternoon provide for quality care for all children.
- Groupings at the beginning and end of days should ensure that there is no over-crowding.
- Early Learning Guides and Educators must ensure that any end of day duties, such as cleaning and securing premises, do not compromise adequate supervision of children.
- Educators should use the QikKids Kiosk system or paper rolls to mark when children are absent, are in attendance or have left for the day.
 - If a child is known to be absent, mark them absent in the electronic roll. The parent will be prompted upon next use to confirm the absence or to advise the Nominated Supervisor of any differences for correction.
 - If a child is in attendance but not signed in by an authorised person, they should be signed in by the educator. The parent will be prompted upon next use to confirm the attendance or to advise the Nominated Supervisor of any differences for correction.
- Educators should monitor the records of children's attendance, including arrivals and departures and actively remind families and authorised collectors of the requirement to sign each child in or out of care. Where electronic systems are used, these must be checked daily and updated by educators where authorised collectors have forgotten.
- Before transitioning from the play space and prior to the commencement of the Afternoon program, educators should look for visual cues that a child may still be on the premises (for example, a backpack remaining) and physically check each area, to ensure no child is still remaining. The daily checklists for each classroom should also be cross checked with the sign in and out records to ensure all children have been collected. Electronic sign in and out systems must be checked to ensure all children were signed out at the end of the day.
- All educators are responsible for ensuring that accurate attendance records are kept which;
 - records the full name of each child attending the service
 - records the date and time each child arrives and departs
 - is completed on the child's arrival and departure by either:
 - the person who delivers or collects the child
 - the Nominated Supervisor or an educator
- Attendance may be recorded in paper form or using an electronic system. Where an electronic system is used all educators and authorised collectors must be aware of the location and process for manually signing in and out in the event of a power or system failure.
- Nominated Supervisors and Responsible Person's in charge must take reasonable steps to check the arrival and departure records on a regular basis to ensure compliance with the National Law and the National Regulations and the Family Assistance Law in relation to Child Care Benefit/Child Care Subsidy.

- Educators in charge of a child at the time of collection must ensure that the child is collected by a parent or authorised nominee, **educators must ask for photo identification of any person who is not known to them to be an authorised collector.**
- Upon enrolment, the parent will be asked to show evidence that they are the child's parent which may include providing a birth certificate and photographic evidence such as a Driver's License. A copy of such evidence should be kept in the child's file in a secure and confidential manner.
- Where court orders or other protection orders are in place all educators must be aware of this and must take reasonable steps to prevent the collection of a child by an unauthorised person. The safety of all children and educators should be the first priority in this instance and staff are not to place themselves or others at risk.
- The storage and display of parent orders or protection orders should comply with the Privacy Act and the Confidentiality and Privacy Policy.
- Families are responsible for providing the centre with any relevant court or parenting orders and for keeping them updated.
- In the event that a child has been collected by an unauthorised person the Nominated Supervisor or responsible person in charge must contact the child's parent/guardian and if necessary the police. Notification must be made as soon as practicable to the approved provider or representative.
- Where a child has been removed from the premises by an unauthorised person it is defined as a 'serious incident' under regulations and must be reported to the regulatory body within 24hrs.
- Where there has been an attempt to collect by an unauthorised person the parent/guardian and management must be notified, and the decision made in relation to contacting the police should this be warranted. A lock down may also be required.
- Staff are to take reasonable steps to prevent a parent or other authorised person from collecting a child where this person's entry would pose a risk to the safety of children and staff. This includes when a collector appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other substances, as per regulation 157. The Early Learning Coordinator and an alternative collector must be called, it may also be appropriate to contact the police depending on the situation. Lock down may also be required – please refer to the Emergency and Evacuation Policy.
- Refusal for collection may occur, as per the Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy, for instance, a written authorisation may be refused by the service if it contravenes with a regulation, service policy or the Nominated Supervisor or responsible person in charge has serious concerns for the child's health, safety or well-being. Refer to the Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy.
- If the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person has concerns that permitting a parent entry would pose a risk to the safety of children and/or staff the Police should be contacted. The Approved Provider should refer any parent with concerns about their safety or the safety of their child to the Local Police Service.
- Our centre policy is that children under school age are not collected by anyone under the age of 16yrs unless that person is the parent or legal guardian of the child.
- Children who are of school age may, with the written consent of the parent/guardian, be collected by another child who is over 12yrs of age or may sign themselves out of the service – this must be recorded in writing and the educator will sign for the departure record.
- If a child is not collected by closing time the responsible person at the service is to;
 - o Make all attempts to contact the parents/guardians and all authorised collectors
 - o Contact the Nominated Supervisor should they not be present

- o If an authorised collector cannot be contacted and the child has not been collected 30 minutes after the centre's normal closing time, please contact the local police station to assist in locating parents/guardians.
- o Two educators will stay with the child until alternative arrangements have been finalised. At all times educators will treat this matter with respect and sensitivity towards the children and family.
- o Once emergency care arrangements have been organised, a notice with the relevant telephone contact numbers will be posted on the centre's entrance. This should maintain confidentiality and not have children's names. The sign should read, *This centre is now closed please call _____ (this may be the local police station number).*
- Late collection fees apply for children not collected by the close of service.
- Where there is a pattern of late collection outside of operational or session hours, the service reserves the right to cancel the enrolment.
- Nominated Supervisors should keep a register of current court orders up to date using the Register of Current Family Court Orders Form. This should be communicated with all staff in a confidential manner.

Responsibility of families at arrival and departure times

The success of arrivals and departures is a shared responsibility between families and . It is recognised as an important time to share information between families and educators and to show children trust and respect between the adults who care for them.

While educators must make all reasonable steps to approach families at both arrival and departure times we ask families to also take a proactive approach and approach educators when they are busy with children or other tasks.

Strategies to support your child prior to arriving at care

- Encourage your child to pack their bag with essentials they will need for the day. If they are too young to pack their bag themselves, talk through what you are putting in there for them. Pack a comforter – a toy or blanket that is something familiar from home for them and let them know it is there.
- Take the time to have a nice conversation at the breakfast table. Tell them the time and who will be picking them up, talk about who they will see and what they might like to do.
- Talking with children and encouraging them to voice any concerns or anxieties they may have is a helpful strategy.

The following are requirements for families at arrival times at our service:

- Always ensure that you advise educators of your child's arrival and share important information about their morning or previous evening which will help educators best support your child, this may be in relation to their feelings or sleep, meal or toileting changes or generally exciting news to share.
- Always ensure children are signed into the electronic system and if this is not available to use the manual paper copy available. Seek help from a staff member if you need assistance, you must never leave without ensuring your child is signed in for their own safety.
- Please apply sunscreen before coming to care so that it meets the Cancer Council recommendation of being applied 20mins prior to going outdoors. If you forget please help your child to apply at the service and let educators know it has just been applied.
- If you have medication you must not leave this in your child's bag, you must provide to an educator and complete the required forms – refer to the Medication Policy
- Help children to put their belongings away, familiar routines are great ways to start the day
- If your child is feeling upset or showing signs of separation anxiety, please let our educators know so we can support you both. Some tips to support your child if they are upset at arrival include:
 - o Don't let your emotions or anxieties affect your child. Try and hold back your tears when you drop them off and call back to see how they are going.
 - o Reassure your child that they will be ok, they will be safe, you know they are sad but you will see them soon, let them know when you will return and what you might do after you collect them.
 - o Say 'goodbye' confidently and reassure them when you leave that you (or someone else) will be back later to collect them.
 - o Try not to prolong the goodbye as this can make it more difficult but ensure that this time is relaxed and not rushed, give your child sufficient time to say their goodbyes in the morning.
 - o Seek support from familiar educators and encourage your child to participate in an activity, pointing out their friends and carers.
 - o Ensure you let us know if your arrival time wasn't wonderfully successful so we can plan to support you and your child
- Ensure all items brought to care, including all clothing, shoes, socks, water bottles and comforters have your child's name clearly labelled.

The following are requirements for families at departures times at our service:

- Always ensure that you advise educators of your arrival to collect your child and seek information about their day, meal times, toileting, sleep times and generally what was exciting for them during their day.
- Always ensure children are signed out of the service using the electronic system and if this is not available to use the manual paper copy available. Seek help from a staff member if you need assistance, you must never leave without ensuring your child is signed out.
- Help your child collect their belongings and ask for any medication which you may need to collect if applicable.
- Let your child know that they were great today, ask about what they did and use information provided to you to connect with their day. "Your teacher said you enjoyed..... it sounds like you had a big lunch, tell me about it... I saw you playing with..... tell me about it..."

Collection from school facility or other arranged location

In the case of after school care where children are collected from another location;

- The educator responsible must carry a list of children to be collected and emergency contact details
- The educator responsible for collection should have access to a working telecommunication device and first aid kit. These may be with the educator or easily accessed from a transport vehicle or accessed on the school premises.
- The educator must not leave the pre-arranged nominated collection point until all children are present and accounted for.
- Where a child who is expected to be collected has not arrived at the collection point the following should occur;
 - o The collecting educator should contact the centre by phone to confirm there was not a message regarding non-attendance.
 - o If the centre believes the child should be requiring collection, then the centre should contact the parent to confirm.
 - o The educator with the children should remain at the collection point in a location which is safe for children also waiting until the centre confirms the collection.
 - o In the event that the parent cannot be contacted the phone contact should be made with the school office to confirm their attendance at school that day.
 - o The educator should only leave the collection point once it has been confirmed that the child does not need collection. The centre may nominate another person to attend to collect the remaining children or to remain at the collection point until confirmation is received.
 - o The safety of all children is paramount, and decisions made at this time should take into account the best location for care for all children.
 - o Where it has been determined that the child was to be collected but has gone missing from the location the regulatory authority must be contacted within 24hrs.

COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

- Educators and families will have access to this policy at all times.
- Educators and families will be provided with opportunities to be involved in the review of this policy.
- Educators will be advised of this policy during their induction process.
- Families will be advised of their responsibilities at the time of enrolment.

RELATED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

- Emergency and Evacuation Policy
- Arrival and departure records
- Records relating to children including enrolment and other health and safety records
- Educator Induction Checklist
- Educator Induction Policy
- Orientation Checklist
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy
- Child Care Provider Handbook
- Register of Current Family Court Orders Form

SCOPE AND ENFORCEMENT

The Failure of any person to comply with this policy in its entirety may lead to;

- Termination of child enrolment
- Performance management of an employee which may lead to termination

RECOGNISED AUTHORITIES AND DOCUMENTS WHICH GUIDE POLICY

- “*Child Care Provider Handbook* –” Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (accessed on-line March 2020)
<https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook>
- “*Education and Care Services National Regulations*”, Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (Nov 2019)
- “*Guide to the National Quality Framework*” Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority Jan 2020
- “How can you help your child settle into child care?” Starting Blocks (accessed on-line March 2020)
<https://www.startingblocks.gov.au/other-resources/factsheets/how-can-you-help-your-child-settle-into-child-care/>

DATE CREATED:

November 2011

REVIEW DETAILS:

Review Date	Details of Changes
January 2013	No changes made, sources updated where applicable
January 2014	No changes made, sources updated where applicable
August 2014	Inclusion of procedures for collection of children from school or other premise in the case of After School Care.
May 2015	No changes made, sources updated where applicable
April 2016	No changes made, sources updated where applicable
May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes around managing sign in and out documents including electronic systems.• There is an expansion on communication at arrival and departure times and steps taken if an unauthorised person collects.• Changes to actions taken when a school-aged child is not at the meeting point for collection for after school care.• Sources updated.
September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inclusion of information about refusal for collection as listed in the Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “<i>Guide to the National Quality Framework</i>” Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority October 2017 included as a source • Inclusion of the need to contact police should there be a concern that permitting entry to a parent may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff. • Upon enrolment, the parent will be asked to show evidence that they are the child’s parent which may include providing a birth certificate and photographic evidence such as a Driver’s License. A copy of such evidence should be kept in the child’s file in a secure and confidential manner.
April 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of attendance record requirements for CCB/CCR/CCS included in Rationale and Implementation <p>Included in Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groupings at the beginning and end of days should ensure that there is no over-crowding. • The storage and display of parent orders or protection orders should comply with the Privacy Act and the Confidentiality and Privacy Policy. • Where there is a pattern of late collection outside of operational or session hours, the service reserves the right to cancel the enrolment. • Updated source to “<i>Guide to the National Quality Framework</i>” Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority Feb 2018, quotes in rationale updated but not resulting in a change to implementation • Updated latest versions for other sources
March 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated sources • Amended minimal age for collection of children to 16yrs from 18yrs
March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated sources • Added additional information for families about supporting children settling into care in Rationale and Implementation • Added family responsibilities in Implementation for arrival and departure times • Inclusion of Register of Current Family Court Orders Form in associate forms • Nominated Supervisors should keep a register of current court orders up to date using the Register of Current Family Court Orders Form. This should be communicated with all staff in a confidential manner • Change in department name to Department of Education, Skills and Employment