

## Child Delivery and Collection

### - *Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations*

#### **Policy Statement**

The delivery and collection of children policy enables Meerilinga’s duty of care and the safety of children attending Meerilinga’s services. The importance of the attendance record being completed and accurate is extremely important. Attendance records are used to assist workers know that all children are accounted for and safe should an emergency arise, to demonstrate all children have arrived and been collected by an parent/guardian or nominee and by the correct time, to record all persons in attendance and to demonstrate compliance with correct staffing stating the qualification/role of each person.

#### **Policy Purpose**

Meerilinga is committed to provide the highest level of safety procedures for children in our services. The Delivery and Collection of Children policy must be followed by Workers involved within Meerilinga’s services. The following information should be communicated with families, through the family handbook.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to children, families/authorised nominees, staff, management and visitors of the service.

#### **Exclusions**

This policy does not apply to non-licensed services such as our facilitated playgroups, facilitated playgroups, parenting and wider community support programs

#### **Policy Review**

Biennial or from time to time when the organisation may make changes to this policy to improve the effectiveness of its operations and customer service.

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| <b>Policy Reviewed</b> | <b>19 January 2023</b> | <b>By</b> | <b>Advisor Policy &amp; Compliance</b> |
| <b>Approved By</b>     | <b>CEO</b>             |           |  |
| <b>Previous Review</b> | <b>8 March 2021</b>    |           |  |

#### **Implementation**

##### ***Attendance Records***

The enrolling parent/guardian or authorised person who delivers or collects the child from the service must sign each child in or out. This record includes the time of arrival and departure.

Accurate attendance records for each child's arrival and departure will be kept and checked each day. This record is a legislated requirement and is necessary to claim Child Care Subsidy (CCS). Furthermore, accurate arrival and departure records ensure successful implementation of efficient emergency evacuation and lock down procedures.

Where families fail to complete the attendance record, the Co-ordinator will input the time of arrival/departure to record the child's attendance.

If a child does not attend for any reason, a record is also required for the absent days as well as the reason for the absence. The service will inform the Department of the type of absence when uploading the weekly attendance information. Any supporting evidence (such as medical certificates) will be collected by the service and kept on the child's file.

Families who do not complete the attendance records will not be eligible to claim Child Care Subsidy.

### ***Arrival***

On arrival at the service, all children must be signed in by the person responsible for verifying the accuracy of the record.

Families will report directly to an Educator. Educators will welcome families and children and seek to engage them in the days planned activities.

A child's medication needs or any other information should be passed on to one of the child's educators by the person delivering the child.

Medication must be given directly to an educator who will store the medication appropriately and ensure the family completes the Medication Authorisation form.

Families need to advise the educator who will be collecting the child/children.

### ***Authorisation for Collecting Children***

The names and contact numbers of all persons authorised to collect children from a Meerilinga Centre must be included on the child's individual enrolment form. Any changes to these authorities must be advised in writing to the service by the enrolling parent/guardian as soon as possible. (Education and Care Services National Law WA Act 2012 165A)

If the enrolling parent arranges for an authorised person named on the child's enrolment form to collect their child, they must contact Centre to advise of this arrangement and confirm who will collect the child.

If the Centre has not been notified and someone other than the enrolling parent arrives to collect the child the Responsible Person in attendance at the time will contact the enrolling parent/guardian to obtain their authorisation in writing. The child will not be released until the enrolling parent/guardians authorisation has been obtained. If the authorised person is not known to Educators at the Centre, the enrolling parent will be asked to provide a description of the person concerned.

Where the Responsible Person or Educators cannot verify a person's identity, photo identification will need to be sighted before the child will be released into that persons care.

### **Departure**

Families are requested to arrive and collect their child/children by close of business. Service opening and closing times are clearly displayed at the entry to the service premises.

The Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will ensure that an enrolled child does not leave the education and care service premises except in accordance with the following procedure:

The child may only leave the premises if the child —

- a) Is given into the care of —
  - i. A parent of the child; or
  - ii. An authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record; or
  - iii. A person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record to collect the child from the premises; or
- b) Leaves the premises in accordance with the written authorisation of the child's parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record; or
- c) Is taken on an excursion in accordance with the written authorisation of the child's parent or authorised nominee in the child's enrolment record, or
- d) A waiver when a child is given into the care of a person or taken outside the premises —
  - i. Because the child requires medical, hospital or ambulance care or treatment;
  - or
  - ii. Because of another emergency.

NB: **Parent** does not include a parent who is prohibited by a court order from having contact with the child.

**Authorised nominee**, in relation to a child, means a person who has been given permission by a parent or family member of the child to collect the child from the education and care service.

Education and Care Services Law (WA) Act 2012 – 165A(4)(5)

In the case of an emergency, where the parent or an authorised contact is unable to collect the child, the parent/guardian or authorised person may arrange an alternative person to collect the child. This contact will need to be authorised in writing.

No child will be withheld from an authorised contact named on the enrolment form. In the case of a separated family, either biological/legal parent/guardian is authorised to collect unless written notice from a court of law stating otherwise is provided to management of the Service. A copy of this written notice will be kept in the child's individual enrolment file.

In the case of a particular person being denied access to a child, Educators will attempt to prevent that person from entering the service and taking the child, however the safety of the educators and other children in care is also important. Educators/staff will not be expected to physically prevent any person from leaving the service.

In this case the parent stated on the written notice from a court of law with custody of the child/ren will be contacted along with the local police. The written court notice overrules any requests made by parents to adapt or make changes.

In the interest of protecting the children and educators at the service, it's requested that families do not give the front door security code to unauthorised persons.

If the person collecting the child appears to be intoxicated, or under the influence of drugs, and educators feel that the person is unfit to take responsibility for the child, educators will:

- Discuss their concerns with the person, if possible without the child being present.
- Suggest they contact another parent or authorised nominee to collect the child.
- Educators will inform the police of the circumstances, the person's name and vehicle registration number if the person insists on taking the child. Educators cannot prevent an incapacitated parent from collecting a child, but must consider their obligations under the relevant child protection laws.

On departure from the service, all children must be signed out by their parent/guardian or authorised nominee person collecting the child.

At the end of each day educators will ensure all children are signed out and check the premises including outdoors and indoors to ensure that no child remains on the premises after the Service closes.

### **Late Collection**

Families who are unavoidably detained and are unable to collect their child at the negotiated collection time must telephone the Service to advise of their lateness and expected time of arrival. If a parent/guardian is unable to collect their child prior to closing time they should arrange for another authorised person to collect the child and advise the Service of this arrangement. This contact will need to be authorised in writing.

If the family have not contacted the Service and the child has not been collected 10 minutes after closing time, the Responsible Person in attendance at the time will telephone the parent/guardian. If there is no response, they will attempt to contact the emergency contact persons listed on the child's enrolment form to arrange for the child's immediate collection.

Families will be charged late fees to cover the staff wages incurred when staff are required to stay behind to care for children who have not been collected prior to the stated closure time.

Special circumstances for example traffic accident or vehicle breakdown will be given consideration in relation to the administration of late fees.

If no parent/guardian or emergency contact person can be contacted and the child has not been collected 30 minutes after the closing time, the Responsible Person will follow the Late Collection process.

### ***Ongoing Strategies for Late Collection:***

This policy on delivery and collection of children late collection of children as well as the acceptance and refusal of authorisations will be highlighted to parents at the time of enrolment, and provided in writing on request.

Families are required to update their contact details and emergency contacts with the service as they change. Regular reminders will be implemented through Service newsletters, emails and an annual update.

Families will be encouraged to name additional emergency contacts, who they expect would be available and able to assist in an emergency. This could include trusted neighbours, if the family does not have relatives or friends on hand to assist.

Where families are continually late to collect children, the following process will be followed to address continuing issues:

- The Co-ordinator will discuss any difficulties the parent is experiencing in collecting their child by closing time. Strategies for the parent to adhere to service hours will be discussed and the parent will be asked to give a commitment to implementing these strategies.
- If there is a further late collection with the family, the Co-ordinator will discuss alternative care options with the family that will best suit their time schedule.

## **Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations**

### ***Authorisation Requirements***

Authorisation documents are required for the following situations and must have details recorded as specified:

### ***Administration of medication:***

- The name of the child.
- The authorisation to administer medication, signed by a parent or person named in the child's enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication.
- The name of the medication to be administered.
- The time and date the medications is to be administered.
- The dosage of the medication to be administered.
- The period of authorisation from and to.
- The date the authorisation is signed.

### ***Medical treatment of the child including transportation by an ambulance service***

(Included and authorised initially as part of the child's enrolment record)

- The name of the child.
- Authorisation to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service.
- Authorisation for the transportation of the child by an ambulance service.
- The name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service and if available the child's Medicare number.
- The name of the parent or guardian providing authorisation.
- The relationship to the child.
- The signature of the person providing authorisation and date.

### ***Emergency Medical Treatment***

(Included and authorised initially as part of the child's enrolment record or as updated during enrolment)

- The service is able to seek emergency medical assistance for a child as required without seeking further authorisation from a parent or guardian in the case of an emergency (i.e. medical practitioner, ambulance or hospital) including for those emergencies relating to asthma and anaphylaxis.

### ***Collection of children***

(Included and authorised initially as part of the child's enrolment record or as updated during enrolment)

- The name of the child.
- The name of the parent or the guardian of the child or the authorised nominee on the enrolment form providing authorisation.
- The name of the person/s authorised by a parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record to collect the child from the premises.
- The relationship to the child of the persons authorised to collect the child from the premises.
- The signature of the person providing authorisation and date.

### ***Excursions***

- The name of the child.
- The date of the excursion (if not for a regular outing).
- The reason for the excursion.
- The proposed destination for the excursion.
- The method of transport to be used (if applicable).
- The proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion.
- The period the child will be away from the premises.
- The anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion.
- The ratio of educators attending the excursion to the number of children attending the excursion.
- The number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion.

- That a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service.
- The name of the parent or guardian providing authorisation.
- The relationship to the child.
- The signature of the person providing authorisation and date.

### ***Confirmation of Authorisation***

All authorisation forms received (other than the initial enrolment form) from families will be verified for accurate completion by the Responsible Person. The authoriser will be checked against the enrolment form to ensure the authorised nominees coincide with the named person on the document.

If the document is incomplete or incorrectly signed, it will be returned to the parent/guardian and will result in refusal for the child to participate in the activity until the enrolling parent/guardian has suitably completed the authorisation and returned it.

### ***Refusal of Written Authorisations***

On receipt of a written authorisation from a parent/guardian that does not meet the requirements outlined in the related service policy, management will:

- Immediately explain to the parent/guardian that their written authorisation does not meet legislative and policy guidelines.
- Provide an explanation and if necessary give the parent/guardian a copy of the relevant service policy and ensure they understand the reasons for the refusal of the authorisation.
- Request that an appropriate alternative written authorisation is provided by the parent/guardian.
- In instances where the parent/guardian cannot be immediately contacted to provide an alternative written authorisation, follow related policy procedures pertaining to the authorisation type.
- Follow up with the parent/guardian, where required, to ensure that an appropriate written authorisation is obtained.
- In all instances of refusal the CEO must be contacted and details recorded on an incident report and submitted as soon as is practicable.

### ***The Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person will:***

- Provide supervision, guidance and advice to ensure adherence to the policy at all times.
- Ensure all authorisations will be retained within the enrolment record, original copy and will include:
  - The name of the child enrolled in the service.
  - The date.
  - The signature of the child's parent/guardian or nominated contact person who is on the enrolment form.
  - The original form/letter/register provided by the service.
- Apply these authorisations to the collection of children, administration of medication, excursion, access to records and transportation via ambulance.

- Ensure authorisations are stored with each individual child's enrolment record.
- Ensure that all parents/guardians have completed the authorised nominee section of their child's enrolment form and that the form is signed and dated before the child is enrolled at the service.

**The Educators will:**

- Apply these authorisations to the collection of children, administration of medication, excursion and access to records.
- Exercise the right of refusal if written or verbal authorisations do not comply.
- Waive compliance where a child requires emergency medical treatment for conditions such as anaphylaxis or asthma. The service can administer medication without authorisation in these cases, provided it is noted on medical plans and parents/guardians are contacted as soon as practicable after the medication has been administered.

**Families will:**

- Ensure the authorised nominee section of their child's enrolment form is complete and signed before the child attends the service.
- Ensure authorised nominees named on the child's enrolment form are current and updated when necessary.
- Inform service of changes to contact numbers to ensure they are contactable at all times.
- Communicate individual requests regarding authorisations to responsible person and staff.
- Update Educators in relation to any medical conditions, medical plans or ongoing medication requirements. This includes the names of medications, dosage, signs, and symptoms and contact information for any relevant health professionals.
- Ensure that where children require medication to be administered, authorisation is given in writing, sign and date it for inclusion in the child's medical record.