Introduction

Bega Valley Shire Council education and care services recognise the significance of arrival and departure times to the health, safety and well-being of children. These are important opportunities for families, educators, staff and children to exchange information, reflect on programs and build strong partnerships.

Correct records of arrival, departure and attendance are vital in emergency response situations and ensure that children are only collected by persons with the required authorisations. These records also ensure that eligible families receive any Child Care Benefit entitlements.

Strategies

Records of attendance, and arrival/ departure requirements

The Nominated Supervisor, Administrative Officer and Educational Leaders will:

• Ensure an attendance register is kept at the education and care service. This will include the full name of the child, the time of arrival and departure. The record will be signed by the person who brings and collects the child, the Nominated Supervisor or the educator.

Rosters

The Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leaders and Educators will:

• Ensure that regular educators are present at arrival and departure times wherever possible to provide a familiar and consistent person for children and families.

Communication

The family (or person with delegated authority for the child) will:

• Ensure the person arriving or collecting a child makes contact with the child’s educator and exchanges information about the child’s day, the child’s health or well-being, the program or any other issues that are relevant to the child. Important information to pass to an educator includes details about a child’s interests, medication, meals, illnesses, routines, changes to the person who will collect the child or anything else that is significant to the child’s daily education and care.

• Be responsible for their child and for any accompanying children whilst they are on the education and care premises.

The Educators will:

• Design an environment that communicates support for children in their transition between home and the education and care service

• Welcome and greet the child and family

• Provide information about the program, any events occurring on the day and pass on any messages that relate to the child’s education, health or well-being.
Review daily records

The Educational Leader or Responsible Person will:

- Review the attendance records each day to confirm all children in attendance in each group are signed in and out. If a child has not been signed in or out, an educator will note in writing that the child is present or has left and remind families to complete this record.

Educators will:

- Ensure two staff confirm at the end of each day that all children have been signed out and that all children have left the education and care service prior to closing and leaving the building.
- Ensure that the building is securely closed, locked and any keys or phones returned to the designated location.

Authority to release a child

The Nominated Supervisor, Responsible Person and all Educators will:

- Ensure that a child is only released:
  - to a parent/guardian who has legal access to the child
  - to the person authorised by the parent/guardian on the child’s enrolment form as their nominee
  - to an officer of a government department delegated by law with authority to collect a child
  - to an emergency response organisation if the child is accompanied by a staff member of the service and requires emergency medical care/treatment.

Refusal of authority

Bega Valley Shire Council education and care services reserve the right to refuse to release a child to a person under the age of 16 years or to a person who appears unable to appropriately care for a child, even if that person has been authorised by the child’s parent/legal guardian.

In these circumstances, the Nominate Supervisor or Responsible Person will:

- Contact the parent or a child protection authority to discuss the circumstances and work with the parent/guardian or child protection authority to achieve a suitable and safe outcome for the child.

Confirmation of identity

All Educators and Administrative Officers will:

- Confirm the identity of a person who has been nominated by the parent with authorisation to collect a child. An educator or staff member will do one or all of the following:
  - Ask for photo identification.
  - Check the child’s record of enrolment for written authority provided by the parent/guardian
  - Ring the parent/guardian to confirm the arrangement if a person arrives to collect a child without pre-arranged agreement even if that person has authority to collect
Staff, students and visitors to the service

All Educators, Staff, Students and Visitors will:

- Report to the office on arrival each day, and sign in and out recording the correct times, and purpose of visit in the designated attendance register.

Evaluation

Arrival and departure times enable families, children and educators to build strong partnerships and also meet all legal requirements.

Legislative requirements

- Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2011.

References

- Bega Valley Shire Council, Behaviour of Councillors and Staff (1.1.2) Code of Conduct Online access: www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au
- Bega Valley Shire Council, Child Protection, Operational draft, June 2012.
- Bega Valley Shire Council, Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation. Operational draft, June 2012
- Community Child Care Co-operative, Sample Policy, Arrival and departure