



Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori

Policy #3

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Introduction

The purposes of this policy are:

- To ensure the welfare and safety of the children in the service.
- To ensure that children are received into the service safely and that parents/carers make direct contact with the appropriate staff members on arrival each day with their child.
- To encourage parents/carers to pick up their children on time.
- To ensure that all children are collected from the service before the end of the last session.

And, where a child is not collected on time:

- To ensure where possible that the child is cared for safely by an experienced and qualified staff member who is known to the child.
- To support staff members in handling exceptional circumstances.

Policy Statement

To ensure that children are received safely into *the Centre/Service*, parents/carers must ensure that they make direct contact with an appropriate member of staff on arrival and pass on any information that is relevant to the child's care for the *day/session*.

'Ensuring continuity of experiences for children requires policies, procedures and practice that promote sensitive management of transitions, consistency in key relationships, liaison within and between settings, the keeping and transfer of relevant information (with parental consent), and the close involvement of parents and, where appropriate, relevant professionals.'

On returning to collect their child, parents/carers are encouraged to meet with their child's Key Person to be given information on how their child has been during the *session/day* and any on significant events/incidents involving/relevant to their child.

Parents/carers must inform the service in person and/or in writing about who will be responsible for collecting their child.

The safety and welfare of the children will be our first consideration where parents/carers fail to collect their children on time and all appropriate measures will be taken to support parents/carers in ensuring that this does not happen.

Parents/carers must inform the service in person and/or in writing of any changes to the planned collection of their child.

Children must only leave the Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori premises with authorised person/s.



Procedures & Practices

On arrival at *the* Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori parents/carers must ensure that they make direct contact with an appropriate member of staff and pass on any information that is relevant to the child's care for the *day/session* (See Key Person Policy and Transitions Policy).

Parents/carers must state on the *Registration/Enrolment* Form the names of persons who are allowed to collect their child.

Parents/carers must notify the service personally (either verbally or in writing), if any other person is to collect their child on any given day.

A staff member is to write in the day communication book of any changes of persons collecting a child for a given day.

If there is no written record by a staff member or a parent/carer as to alternative arrangements for collecting a child, **nobody but the parent/carer** will be given access to the child.

A staff member will contact a parent if a discrepancy arises about the collection of children. All children must remain on the premises until parents/carers have been notified.

Parents/carers are to present to a staff member when collecting their child.

On returning to collect their child, parents/carers will be encouraged to meet with their child's Key Person to be given information on how their child has been during the *session/day* and any on significant events/incidents involving/relevant to their child.

In the event that a child is not collected

Parents/Carers are informed that if they are not able to collect the child as planned, they must inform the appropriate staff member. We will provide them with our contact number to phone.

We will inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

We will also inform parents/carers that in the event that their children are not collected from the setting by an authorised adult, the staff are unable to make contact with the parent/carer and the staff can no longer supervise the child on our premises, we apply our Child Protection Procedures as set out in our Child Protection Policy.

In this event, we will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible.

Where we have not been contacted before collection time by a parent/carer:

- A staff member will contact a parent/carer as soon as possible.
- Staff will ensure that the child is cared for until the situation is resolved.

In a situation where a child has not been picked up at close to normal time.



Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori

- Two staff members are to remain at Centre with the child.
- A parent/carer is to be contacted via information on the *Enrolment/Registration/Admission Form* to establish a time for collection.
- If unsuccessful in contacting a parent/carer, two staff members must remain at the service and contact the Manager.
- After *15 to 30 minutes*, staff members are to choose the best-suited option:
 - Remain at the Centre – continuing to try to contact parent/carer.
 - Ring emergency number and after consultation with them, arrange for the child/ren to become the responsibility of designated liason person.

Do **not** allow the child to leave with any person not nominated by parents/carers except designated liason person.

Under no circumstances are staff members to go to look for the parent or to take the child home with them.

A full written report of the incident is to be recorded.

Depending on circumstances, you might say here that the service reserves the right to charge parents/carers for the additional hours worked by staff.

In the event of late collection of a child/ren

Staff must ensure that the parents/carers are aware of session ending times and ask them for their co-operation.

Habitual lateness in collection of children

Staff will ensure that the parents/carers are aware of session ending times and ask them for their co-operation.

If the problem continues, staff will:

- Discuss with the parents/carers whether they are experiencing particular difficulties in arriving on time.
- Determine whether there are any underlying factors including stress on the family.
- Offer to contact a support person such as a Social Worker to offer support to the family if stress is a concern.
- Enforce the €10 per fifteen minutes Late Fee (effective from the very first minute the parent/carer is late), to help cover cost of staff cover and to encourage parents/carers to collect children on time.

Repeated failure to collect a child can be an indicator of neglect or of extreme family pressure requiring additional support.

Parents who arrive to collect children in an 'unfit state'

Occasionally a parent collecting a child may arrive in an 'unfit state' due to illness, drugs or alcohol. Where the condition is severe, it may be quite distressing for staff members who have concerns for the child/ren's well being.

Staff members have no legal rights to withhold a child from a parent in these circumstances. However, the following measures may be adopted where appropriate:

1. Attempt to calm the parent before he or she leaves with the child, e.g. invite him/her to sit down for a cup of coffee and talk with a staff member.
2. Offer to contact a family member or friend, or the person(s) listed as the child's emergency contact on their enrolment form.



Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori

3. Offer to call a taxi.

If the parent rejects the above suggestions and insists on taking the child, there is no legal recourse open to staff. However, if staff feel that the wellbeing of the child is at risk they have a duty to act as outlined in **Our Duty to Care: the principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people**, Department of Health and Children, 2002): 'It is important to always put the child's safety and well being first, over and above any other considerations.'

It is, therefore, always the policy of *the Centre* that 'the welfare of the child is the most important consideration'.

For that reason, where there is a risk to the child it is in the best interest of the child for staff to discuss their concerns with the duty social worker in their local HSE or, in case of emergency, contact the Gardaí.

Communication Plan

All parents/carers are to be informed of the Arrivals and Departures Policy on registration. Staff members will check with parents/carers that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.

A summary of this policy will be included in the Parents'/Carers' Handbook. This policy will also be included in staff induction and annual staff training.

A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff members and parents/carers in the Policy Folder located in the main office. Parents/Carers may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request. Parents/Carers and staff will receive written notification of any updates.

Review Date

Date:

Person Responsible:

Related Policies, Procedures and Forms

- Admissions Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Records Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Key Person Policy
- Transitions Policy
- Interactions Policy
- Registration/Enrolment Forms
- Incident Recording Forms



Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori

References

- Child Care (Pre-school Services) Regulations, 2006 and Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No 2) (Amendment) Regulations, 2006
- [Síolta – The National Framework for Quality in Early Childhood Education](#)
- **Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children**
The full report can be downloaded at: www.dohc.ie/publications/children_first.html
- **Our Duty to Care** which is available at www.dohc.ie/publications/our_duty_to_care.html
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Child Care Act, 1991

Contact Information [Who to contact for more information]

Name:

Policy Created

Date:

Signatures

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....