



## Authorised Contact Persons

### Children's Services Policy No 1.8

**Date issued:** September 2012

**Replaces issue:** 1.10 Authority for collecting children

**Date effective:** September 2012

**Date revised and updated:** April 2015, November 2015, August 2018, October 2020; and December 2022

#### **Aim:**

- To ensure only persons duly authorised by the parent/carer are able to collect a child from the education and care service.
- To ensure that where parents/carers are not contactable that the education and care service has been given authorisation to contact other nominated persons to ensure the wellbeing of the child.

#### **Background Information:**

The [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#) requires that parents/carers of children attending an approved education and care service provide details of persons authorised to ensure the wellbeing of the child in the absence of a parent/carer.

#### **Relevant Legislation:**

- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#)
- [Children \(Education and Care Services National Law Application\) Act 2010](#)

#### **Resources:**

- [Child Care Provider Handbook](#), Australian Government, Department of Education, Skills and Employment
- [Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority - National Quality Standard](#)
  - **Quality Area 2:**
    - Standard 2.2 - Element 2.2.1, Element 2.2.2 and Element 2.2.3

**Note:** In this policy "staff" and "educators" refers to staff employed by Willoughby City Council.

**Application:** This policy applies to Council managed services, including: Long Day Care and Out of School Hours Services.

#### **Practices:**

- Parents/carers will be required to provide authorisations on their child's enrolment form.
- Where a parent does not provide authorisations that are deemed necessary under the Education and Care Services Regulations, the service is not able to enrol the child.

#### **Parental access:**

Parents/carers are able to collect their child from the education and care services at a time that is convenient and that meets the needs of that parent. Should staff have a concern

regarding a parent posing a risk to the safety of the children or staff at a service, they do not have to grant entry to that parent, even if that parent has parenting rights (Education and Care Services National Regulations).

#### **Court Orders:**

- The service must be provided with a certified copy of any court orders at the time of enrolment of the child or after the making of any subsequent court order.
- Staff/educators will adhere to court orders in respect to releasing a child to a parent/carer, or providing access to a parent/carer.
- It is at the Nominated Supervisor's discretion to contact the police if it is considered that the child, other children, or staff are at risk of harm by adhering to the court order.
- Strategies for dealing with each individual situation will be discussed by the Nominated Supervisor and the custodial parent/carer upon provision of a copy of any court order.
- Where required, staff are to follow the Critical Incidents Procedure (Policy 2.19) if a prohibited parent enters the service.

#### **Authorised Nominee for collection of Child:**

An "Authorised Nominee" is a person who has been given permission by a parent or family member to collect the child from the education and care service or the family day care educator (Education and Care Services National Regulation).

On the centre's enrolment form, parents/carers are asked to provide contact details of at least **two** people who they wish to formally nominate as an Authorised Nominee to be able to collect the child from the service, without further consent from the parents/carers.

Staff/educators are not permitted to release a child into the care of any person other than a parent, who has parenting rights, unless they have been nominated.

#### **Emergency Nominee:**

An Emergency Nominee is a person the service can contact in the event of an emergency and where the parent is not immediately contactable.

An emergency may constitute an accident or illness requiring medical or dental treatment, or when the parent/carer has failed to collect the child by the closing time of the service.

If the emergency contact is required to collect the child from the service for any reason, then they also need to be an Authorised Nominee. The child will be released once photo identification has been sighted. In normal circumstances, any emergency contact listed on the enrolment forms should be aged 18 years or over.

An emergency contact person may be an aunt or grandparent who may not be authorised to collect the child from the centre, but will be the person who would need to be notified in an emergency, for example to meet a child at the hospital. However, we strongly recommend that the emergency person also be an Authorised Nominee.

#### **Medical Treatment Authorised Nominee:**

A Medical Treatment Authorised Nominee is a person nominated as being able to consent to medical treatment of the child or to authorise the administration of medication to the child.

Where it is determined that immediate treatment is required, the service will in the event of an emergency contact the relevant emergency services prior to attempting to contact parents/carers or authorised persons, regardless of whether or not a parent has provided them with approval to contact emergency services, or access medical treatment.

## **Procedures for Collection of Children by an Authorised Nominee:**

### ***Via the Enrolment Form***

- Although permission has been sought, we do ask that should an authorised nominee be collecting a child that the parent/carer notifies the service where possible.
- If the service has not received this additional notification, staff/educators will attempt to contact the parent/carer to verify that the child may be released into the care of the authorised nominee.
- If the parent/carer cannot be contacted, then the child will automatically be released to the authorised nominee once photo identification has been sighted. In normal circumstances, any authorised person listed on the enrolment forms should be aged 18 years or over.

### ***Other Methods of Authorisation***

At other times, the parent/carer is able to nominate in writing other people who are authorised to collect their child on a temporary basis. The service must be notified in writing, providing full contact details of the person and the date that specifically applies to this authorisation.

Where a person authorised in writing by a parent to collect their child is aged 18 years or over, they will be required to provide photo identification to staff at the time of collection of the child. If there is any doubt as to the identification of the authorised person, the parent/carer will be contacted immediately for verification prior to release of the child.

Under exceptional circumstances parents/carers may nominate and authorise a person to collect their child over the phone.

Where a person authorised is aged less than 18 years of age, the following considerations will apply:

- The age of the child being collected;
- The age of the collecting child;
- Familiarity of the collecting child; and
- The distance home, including mode of transport.

In these circumstances, the Nominated Supervisor will:

- Require notification in writing from the parent detailing specific dates and the mode of transport home; and
- Ask to meet the collecting child prior to the first collection. This must be in the presence of the parent to verify the collecting child's identity.

The Nominated Supervisor retains the discretion to refuse to release a child if the Nominated Supervisor deems the child/ren will be at risk of harm in any way. The Nominated Supervisor, or 'Responsible Person', will contact the parent/carer or emergency contact if this situation arises.

Where the parent is authorising a school aged child to enter and leave the education and care service unattended, the following considerations will apply:

- The age of the child.
- The distance home, including mode of transport.

In these circumstances the Nominated Supervisor will:

- Require notification in writing from the parent, detailing specific dates and the mode of transport home.
- Retain the discretion to refuse to release a child to leave the centre independently if the Nominated Supervisor deems the child will be at risk of harm in any way. The

Nominated Supervisor, or 'Responsible Person', will contact the parent/carer or emergency contact if this situation arises.