

09 Childcare practice procedures

09.6 Prime times – arrivals and departures

Prime times of the day make the very best of routine opportunities to promote 'tuning-in' to the child emotionally and to create opportunities for learning. Arrivals and departures are key times in the day when children need support from their carer to make the transition smooth and happy; these times of day also pose a certain level of risk as parents and carers come and go. All staff are aware of the potential risks and take measures to minimise them.

Arrivals

The supervisor always greets and records an initial register of the children and takes time to hear information the parents need to share.

- Always ensure that the parents say goodbye to their child and say when they are coming back, such as 'after tea', rather than just 'later'.
- The supervisor will hand over the information shared by the parents to the key person and/or other practitioners on a need-to-know basis.
- Arrival and departure times for children are written down in the welcome letter.
- The register is called within 10 minutes of the start of the session. All people present are marked on the register. If anyone arrives late or leaves after this time it is recorded in the register and the time is noted. Visitors to the group sign the visitors' book.
- If a child who is expected fails to arrive, this is recorded in the absence book.

Injuries noted on arrival

- If a child is noted to have visible injuries when they arrive at the setting procedure 6.1 is followed.

Departures

- Children are prepared for home, with clean faces, hands and clothes if required.
- A practitioner always greets parents when they arrive, ensuring that the person who has arrived to collect the child is named on the registration form. They hand over the child personally and enter the time of departure in the register (if not a usual collection time).
- Only persons aged over 16 years should normally collect children. If a parent has no alternative, then this is agreed with the setting manager and a risk assessment completed and signed by the parent. In all cases the setting manager will ask the parents to ensure that in future alternative arrangements are made. If the parent is under 16 years of age a risk assessment will be completed. No child will be collected by anyone who has not reached 14 years of age. The risk assessment should take account of factors such as age/vulnerability of child, journey travelled, arrangements upon leaving the setting to go home/elsewhere.

- Practitioners verbally exchange information with parents.

Maintaining children's safety and security

Arrivals and departures pose a particular threat to the safety and security of the children. To minimise the risk of a child leaving the premises unnoticed, only one child leaves at a time.

Staff

The staff have their own hours written into their contract. Normal hours are written on the register.

The supervisor arrives first with the keys to unlock the door.

Staff remain at the group after the children leave. If a child is left behind two staff members remain until the child is collected.

The supervisor locks the doors at night and is the last to leave.

The names of the staff members for that day are displayed on a board outside and in the register.

If a staff member has to leave the session due to illness of either themselves or a family member, cover will be sought before the departure.