

09 Early years 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

- A member of staff will always greet young children. This ensures that young children are received into the setting by a familiar and trusted adult.
- The staff member who greets the child marks their presence and time of arrival in the register.
- If a child who is expected fails to arrive, this is recorded on the child's personal file and the Childcare Manager is immediately notified so that they can contact the child's parents to find out why the child is absent following procedure 09.2 Absence.
- The member of staff greets the parents and takes time to hear information the parents need to share. They inform the parents of aspects of the day, such as if there is an agency member of staff or flexible worker in, which members of staff will be around later when parents collect their child, any planned outings, or special planned event. Any consent forms are signed.
- The member of staff receives the child physically and tunes in to how he or she is feeling and prepares to meet his/her needs.
- Parents should spend a few minutes with their child and member of staff before leaving. Many parents will be in a hurry, but this can have an unsettling effect.
- 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 member of staff who received the child will share important information about the child with the rest of the team in a timely manner. Confidential information should be shared with the Team Leader and Childcare Manager.

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.

- The member of staff always aims to greet parents when they arrive and share key information about their child's session. As long as they recognise the person collecting the child they hand over the child personally and enter the time of departure in the register.
- Only persons aged over 16 years should normally collect children. If a parent has no alternative, then this is agreed with the Childcare Manager and a risk assessment completed and signed by the parent. In all cases the Childcare 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.
- Members of staff verbally exchange information with parents and make sure they are aware of any accidents or incidents that occurred during the session.

Maintaining children's safety and security

Arrivals and departures pose a particular threat to the safety and security of the children, particularly when parents arrive at the same time or when in shared premises. To minimise the risk of a child leaving the building unnoticed, the Childcare Manager conducts a risk assessment that identifies potential risks and the measures put in place to minimise them, such as staff busy talking to individual parents or doors left ajar. The risk assessment is shared with their line manager and is updated as and when required. View procedure 01.1 Risk assessment and 01.1a Generic risk assessment form for further guidance.