



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

- All staff are available to greet the children. This ensures that young children are received into the setting by a familiar and trusted adult.
- The manager or deputy marks the children's presence and time of arrival in the register.
- If a child who is expected fails to arrive, they are marked 'U' (unexplained absence) in the register and the setting 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.
- Parents should notify staff if someone else is picking their child up that day. Staff greet the parents and take time to hear information the parents need to share. They remind parents of any aspects of the day such as planned outings, or special planned event. Any consent forms are signed.
- All staff greet and welcome the children and tune in to see how they are feeling and prepare to meet their needs.
- Parents should share any information about their child that is relevant to the staff member on the door. If they wish to speak to their child's key person individually, time and space is made for this.
- 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'.
- If the member of staff receiving the child is not the key person, the member of staff will hand over the information shared by the parents to the key person when they arrive.

Injuries noted on arrival

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

Changing shifts and handing over information

- When the key person leaves or goes on a break, they handover the care of the child to another member of staff.
- If someone other than the key person receives the child, he/she will share any information from the parent and if necessary write a note for the key person. Confidential information should be shared with the setting manager to pass on.
- The key person shares information with the other staff, in this way they ensure that all information is passed on to the parent in the key person's absence.

Departures

- Children are prepared for home, with clean faces, hands and clothes if required.
- A member of staff greet parents when they arrive, ensuring that the person who has arrived to collect the child is authorised to collect. 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 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.
- If someone other than the key person is with the child at the end of the day, the key person should pass general information to the other staff or write a note for the parents. Confidential information should be shared with the setting manager to pass on.

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 setting 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.