

Child Care Centre

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures

Name of Child Care Centre: St.Andrew's Cooperative Plays school

Date Policy and Procedures Established: December 10, 2023

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: December 10, 2023

Purpose

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

Policy

General St.Andrew's Co-op Playschool will ensure that any child receiving child care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization to the child care centre may release the child to.

St.Andrew's Co-op Playschool will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.

- A parent/guardian may request that a child who is 18 years old or older be released from child care without supervision. Parents/Guardians must provide written and signed authorization and instructions for the release of the child including the time of dismissal.
- Where a parent/guardian provides written instructions for the release of their child from care without supervision, the parent/guardian is aware that the child care is no longer responsible for that child upon their dismissal.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
 - greet the parent/guardian and child.
 - ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the child's registration form or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).
 - document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
 - sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
 - inform the supervisor and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:00 am Staff shall call the parents of the child to check in and see if they are coming to school.

2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual to whom the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care centre may release the child to leave the centre. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),
 - confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
 - where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before the centre closes)

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up by 11:55 (toddler) 12:05 (preschool) or 2:30 (extended-day preschool), the supervisor shall contact the parent/guardian by a phone call and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
 - Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff must call to ensure that both parents have been called. If both parents have been called then the child's authorized pickup person will be called. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
 - Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child, the staff shall contact emergency contact, wait until the program closes and then refer to procedures under "where a child has not been picked up and the program is closed" call the child's emergency contacts.

Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 12:00 pm (toddler) 12:15 pm (preschool) or 2:45 pm (extended-day preschool), staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds to call the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire about their pick-up time. If the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall contact authorized individuals listed on the child's file.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 12:00 pm (toddler) 12:15 (preschool) or 2:45 (extended-day preschool) the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) (905)895-2318 or 1-800-718-3850. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction for the next steps.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

1. Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.

Glossary

Individual authorized to pick-up/authorized individual: a person that the parent/guardian has advised the child care program staff in writing can pick-up their child from care.

Licensee: The individual or corporation named on the licence issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the child care centre and home child agency.

Parent/guardian: A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.