



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 parent/carers and carers come and go. All staff are aware of the potential risks and take measures to minimise them.

Arrivals

- A key person always greets young children at the door. This ensures that young children are received into the setting by a familiar and trusted adult.
- The key person who greets the child marks their presence and time of arrival in the tick sheet.
- If a child who is expected fails to arrive, this is recorded on the tick sheet and the Pre-school Lead is immediately notified so that they can contact the child’s parent/carers to find out why the child is absent following procedure 09.2 Absence.
- The key person takes note on the tick sheet of any changes to who or when a child will be collected. This is also marked on the white board by the front door.
- The key person greets the parent/carers and takes time to hear information the parent/carers need to share. They inform the parent/carers 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 parent/carers collect their child, any planned outings, or special planned event. Any consent forms are signed.
- The key person receives the child physically and tunes in to how he or she is feeling and prepares to meet his/her needs.
- Always ensure that the parent/carers say goodbye to their child and say when they are coming back, such as ‘lunch time’, 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 parent/carers to the key person when they arrive.

Injuries noted on arrival

- If a child has a visible injury when they arrive an “Existing Injuries” form is completed.
- If a child is noted to have visible injuries when they arrive at the setting and it is thought that a safeguarding issue may be evident then 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 a 'back-up' key person.
- If someone other than the key person receives the child, he/she will share any information from the parent/carer and write a note for the key person. Confidential information should be shared with the Pre-school Lead to pass on. It is also noted on the white board by the front door unless confidential.
- The key person shares information with the back-up key person, in this way they ensure that all information is passed on to the parent/carer in the key person's absence.

Departures

- Children are prepared for home, with clean faces, hands and clothes if required.
- The key person always aims to greet parent/carers when they arrive. 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 the parent/carer 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.
- Educators verbally exchange information with parent/carers.
- 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 parent/carers. Confidential information should be shared with the Pre-school Lead or Deputy 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 parent/carers arrive at the same time or when in shared premises. To minimise the risk of a child leaving the building unnoticed, the Pre-school Lead conducts a risk assessment that identifies potential risks and the measures put in place to minimise them, such as staff busy talking to individual parent/carers or doors left ajar. The risk assessment is shared with the Committee chair and is updated as and when required. View procedure 01.1 Risk assessment and 01.1a Generic risk assessment form for further guidance.