

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

- Whenever possible the key person or back up key person always greets young children. 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 register.
- If a child who is expected fails to arrive, this is recorded on the Blossom app. 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.
- The key person ensures that the child has been signed on the Blossom app. there is a clear indication of who will be collecting the child (password given if necessary), and at what time.
- The key person greets the parents and takes time to hear information the parents need to share. They inform the parents of aspects of the day.
- The key person 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 key person 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 'lunchtime', 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. The appropriate form is filled in and signed and put in the safeguarding folder.

Changing shifts and handing over information

- If someone other than the key person receives the child, he/she will share any information from the parent and 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 back-up key person, 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.
- The key person always aims to greet parents when they arrive, ensuring that the person who has arrived to collect the child is a named contact on the Blossom app. 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.
- Educators 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. 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. At least one member of staff is to stay in the main hall with the remaining children with the double doors closed. This minimises the risk of a child leaving the building without his/her parent/carer. 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.