



## 2.4 Delivery & Collection of Children

### Purpose

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The *Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011)* requires John Street to have a policy on the delivery and collection of children, and the refusal of authorisations for a child to leave the service.

### Objective

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To ensure that:

- Children's arrival and departure routines are relaxed and happy, and transitions from John Street to home protect the child's wellbeing
- Families are provided with reassurance that their child will be safe and not be released to unauthorised people, with clear late pick up procedures and understanding if they are unavoidably delayed
- Educators have time to discuss matters with families at the beginning and end of the day, have clear guidelines to follow in the event that a child is not collected when expected, with their own commitments after normal work hours not to be compromised, and overtime pay
- The Board have dependable staff and support from relevant agencies and departments, and can encourage families to take responsibility for their child and not to misuse the services offered by John Street.

### Scope of Policy

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This policy applies to all educators and families of John Street, and will be highlighted to families at the time of enrolment and provided in writing on request.

### Definitions

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**Authorised persons** – in relation to the authorisation to collect, an authorised person is an adult 18 years or over who has been nominated by the enrolling family member as an authorised person to collect the child when the family cannot collect their child themselves.

## **Policy Statement**

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All children have the right to experience quality care in an environment which provides for their health and safety. The *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* requires that John Street take reasonable care to protect children from foreseeable risk of harm, ensuring that children are only released to authorised persons as a key aspect of children's safety.

The Director and educators ensure that the attendance of all children enrolled in John Street is accurately recorded in accordance with regulatory and government guidelines. Families are required to personally deliver and collect their children, or arrange with John Street for an authorised person to do so. John Street's procedures for delivery and collection must be followed in every instance, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children at all times.

John Street will ensure the protection of children not collected by closing time. Families are expected to abide by John Street's hours of operation, except in an extreme emergency. John Street is unable to provide care to children after hours on a regular basis.

## **Procedures**

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### **Arrival at John Street**

- Educators will welcome families and children on arrival and seek to engage them in the day's planned activities.
- Any personal items must be put inside the child's bag, which should be stored or hung up in the nominated area.
- Any medications must be given directly to the educator who will check the family has completed an '**Authority to Administer Medication Form**' and then store the medication in the appropriate place.
- Educators and families or children may need to exchange information at this time in preparation for arriving at or departing from John Street. If this exchange of information involves discussions about private or personal details, the discussion will take place in a private area in accordance with John Street's Confidentiality policy.

### **Attendance record**

- Accurate attendance records will be kept and checked each day.
- The enrolling parent/guardian or authorised person who brings the child to John Street or collects the child from John Street must complete an attendance record to confirm the child's times of arrival and departure (either by using the digital sign-in facility or, where that isn't available, signing a paper form).
- If a child does not attend for any reason John Street will enter the type of absence on the attendance record and the parent/guardian must verify the absence by approving (either digitally or by signing a paper sheet) the attendance record any relevant documentation at a later date.
- Families who do not complete the attendance records may not be eligible to claim Child Care Subsidy.

### **Authorisation for collecting children, and refusal of authorisation for a child to leave John Street**

- The names and contact numbers of all persons authorised to collect children from John Street must be included on the '**Enrolment Form**' or '**Authorisation to collect form**' which has been completed by either a parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record. Families will be encouraged to name additional emergency contacts, who they expect would be available and able to assist in an emergency. This could include trusted neighbours if the family does not have relatives or friends on hand to assist.
- Any changes to these authorities must be advised in writing to John Street by the enrolling parent/guardian as soon as possible. John Street will ask families to update their own details and their emergency contact numbers as they change.
- Authorised persons must be 18 years or over to be accepted by John Street as an authorised person for a child to leave the service with.
- If the family arranges for an authorised person to collect their child from John Street, they must contact John Street to advise of this arrangement prior to the collection of the child, and confirm who will collect the child.
- Families are required to complete John Street's '**Authorisation to collect child form**' (available on John Street's website) to nominate an authorised adult.
- Children in attendance at John Street will not be permitted to leave the service alone, and families who request their child to leave unaccompanied by an authorised adult will not be accepted (e.g. request for child to walk home at a certain time).
- If John Street has not been notified in writing through the **Authorisation to collect child form**, and someone other than the enrolling parent/guardian arrives to collect the child, the Director will:
  - Contact the enrolling parent/guardian to obtain their authorisation in writing via email
  - If the authorised person is not known to John Street, the enrolling parent/guardian will be asked to provide a description of the person concerned, who will also be required to provide proof of their identity.
- The child will not be released until the enrolling parent/guardian's authorisation has been obtained in writing. This person must have been nominated on the child's enrolment form as an authorised person, or the child will not be released to the unknown person.
- If the enrolling parent/guardian cannot be contacted, or where the unknown person arrived to collect the child has not been nominated as an authorised person to collect the child, late collection procedures will apply.
- If a person other than an authorised person attempts the removal of a child, the Director and/or educators will explain that they are required by law to contact the child's legal guardian before the child may be taken. The procedure below will be followed.

**Procedure on attempted removal of a child from John Street by a non-approved person**

- 1) Director (or educator) will politely inform the non-approved person that they are not authorised to hand the child over.
- 2) If the person persists, s/he will be offered the use of the telephone and/or documentation to check regulations and the Director will be contacted.
- 3) If the person is persistent, the Director or another educator will contact the police.
- 4) The educators will take all reasonable measures to prevent the child from being taken from John Street, and will also use delaying tactics to allow the police more time to arrive. The safety of children and staff is paramount in such a situation.
- 5) In the event that educators are unable to prevent the child from being taken, an educator will, if possible, accompany the child to the car and get the make, model and registration of car, a description of clothing of person and a description of the child's clothing.
- 6) Staff will immediately contact the police again as well as the child's parents, Department of Human Services if they are involved (i.e. custody arrangement), and the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
- 7) Staff will document the incident immediately.

**Late collection**

- John Streets hours of opening are clearly displayed at the entry to John Street.
- Families are required to plan their day in order to ensure they are at John Street prior to closing time. Educators may need time to give families information about their child's day, and educators also have evening commitments they wish to fulfill. John Street asks families to endeavor to collect their children before 5.55 pm, allowing educators time to lock up John Street by 6.00 pm.
- Families who are unavoidably detained and are unable to collect their child by 6.00 pm must telephone John Street to advise of their lateness and expected time of arrival.
- If the family has not contacted John Street and the child has not been collected by 6:10 pm, John Street will attempt to telephone the parent/guardian or if this is not possible telephone the emergency contact people listed on the child's enrolment form to arrange for the child's immediate collection. A note will be left on the main entrance door indicating where the child is.
- If neither parent or emergency contact can be reached by 6.30 pm, a Board Member will be requested to attend John Street to remain with the child and a staff member.
- In the interests of protecting educators from allegations of abuse, two adults will remain at John Street with the child at all times.
- John Street may decide to contact the police to find out if the parent has been involved in an accident, or to ask the police to take action to try to locate the parent/guardian.
- If the educators present are unable to remain at John Street to care for the child, the Director will contact

any educators who have agreed to make themselves available in these circumstances and asked to relieve present educator/s as soon as they are able.

- Educators will care for the child's needs (i.e. provide a snack or evening meal) and reassure the child if he/she is anxious, provide the child with some fun games or activities and, if appropriate, settle the child down to sleep (young children).
- If the child has not been collected by 8.00 pm, the Board Member will contact the Child Protection Services.
- Parents are asked to consider the inconvenience to staff and the stress for the child. The cost of detaining staff members will result in a fine of \$30 for every 15 minutes, or part thereof.
- When the parent/guardian or emergency contact person arrives to collect the child they will be required to complete and sign a '**Late Collection Form**', which indicates the time of collection and confirms their understanding that a late fee will be charged.
- Special circumstances will be given consideration in relation to the administration of late collection fees.
- Any extra hours worked by educators at John Street will be paid as overtime.

#### **Families regularly collecting their children late**

Where families are continually late to collect children, the following process will be followed to address continuing issues.

- When a family is continually and regularly late arriving at John Street to collect their child, the Director will discuss other collection arrangement and child care options with the family.
- On the next late collection within two weeks of the first incident, a letter will be sent to the family advising them that another late collection of their child will result in cancellation of their place at John Street.
- The Director will speak with the parent to alert them to the grievance process, and to discuss any difficulties the parent is experiencing in collecting their child by closing time. Strategies for the parent to adhere to service hours will be discussed, and the parent will be asked to give a commitment to implementing these strategies.
- If there is a further late collection within two weeks the family's enrolment will be cancelled.
- Where a number of families are continually and regularly late, John Street may consider surveying families to see if there is sufficient need to consider extending the hours of opening.

#### **Responsibility**

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It is the responsibility of all educators, the Director and the Board at John Street to implement this policy.

The Director will regularly remind families through the John Street newsletter, website, notices in the entry area, a reminder on the family's fee receipts, a letter to families, or other means, to ensure that their authorities to collect and emergency contacts are up to date.

## Legislative Provisions

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**Education & Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic)** – Section 3(2)(a); 165; 167; 175; 189

### Child Care Service Handbook 2017-2018:

<b>Section 4.6</b>	<i>Recording attendance</i>
<b>Section 4.7</b>	<i>Who is responsible for ensuring that attendance records are kept?</i>
<b>Section 4.8</b>	<i>Absences from care</i>
<b>Section 5.4</b>	<i>Key obligations imposed on approved child care services under family assistance law</i>
<b>Section 6.5</b>	<i>What are my services responsibilities to parents?</i>
<b>Section 10</b>	<i>Reporting attendance information</i>
<b>Section 13</b>	<i>Absences from child care</i>

### Education and Care services National Regulations 2011:

<b>r.99</b>	<i>Children leaving the education and care service premises</i>
<b>r.158</b>	<i>Children's attendance record to be kept by approved provider</i>
<b>r.168</b>	<i>Education and care service must have policies and procedures</i>
<b>r.176</b>	<i>Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority</i>

### National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care & School Age Care

<b>Standard 2.2</b>	<i>Each child is protected</i>
<b>Element 2.2.1</b>	<i>At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.</i>

### Early Years Learning Framework for Australia

<b>Practices:</b>	<i>Holistic Approaches; Responsiveness to children;</i>
<b>Outcomes:</b>	3

### Background Legislation

<b>Children Wellbeing &amp; Safety Act 2005</b>	<i>Supporting children's wellbeing</i>
<b>Children Youth and Family Act 2005</b>	<i>Reporting and referral for child and family wellbeing</i>
<b>Information Privacy Act 2000</b>	<i>Management of personal information</i>
<b>Family Law Act 1975</b>	<i>Court Orders</i>

### Sources

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Shaw, M, *Developing and implementing your service's child protection policy*, extract from *Putting Children First*, Newsletter of the National Childcare Accreditation Council, Issue 36, December 2010.

Tansey, S, *Supervision in children's services*, extract from *Putting Children First*, the Newsletter of the National Childcare Accreditation Council, Issue 15, September 2005.

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority, *Guide to the National Law and National Regulations*, © John Street Community Early Childhood Co-op. 2019

accessed from [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

National Professional Support Coordinator Alliance (2012), *Getting started with policies for the NQF: Policies in Practice template – Delivery & Collection of Children*, accessed February 2012 from [www.pscalliance.gov.au](http://www.pscalliance.gov.au)

### Related John Street Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

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<b>Policies</b>	<i>Administration of First Aid; Confidentiality &amp; Management of Records; Enrolment, Orientation &amp; Custody Arrangements; Payment of Fees &amp; Bookings; Missing Children; Establishing a Protective Care Environment; Dealing with Complaints; Health, Hygiene &amp; Infection Control; Dealing with Medical Conditions &amp; Medication; Communication with Families; Supervision of Children; Excursions &amp; Routine Outings; Breast Feeding &amp; Infant Formula</i>
<b>Appendices</b>	<i>Enrolment Form; Authorisation to Collect</i>

### Authorisation

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This policy was approved by the John Street Board in March 2019.