

Acceptance, Delivery and Collection of Children Policy

Purpose

This policy ensures that all ECMS services obtain and manage written authorisations appropriately and safely deliver and collect children in accordance with regulatory requirements. It outlines procedures to ensure children are only released into the care of authorised individuals and details the circumstances where authorisations may be refused.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- The Approved Provider, persons with management or control, Centre Director, Nominated Supervisor, and persons in day-to-day charge.
- Early Childhood teachers, educators, staff, contractors, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others enrolled and participating in ECMS programs and services, including during offsite excursions and activities.
- All ECMS-operated Early Learning Centres and Kindergarten programs.

Policy Principles

ECMS is committed to an anti-bias approach in early childhood. ECMS operates within a framework of social justice and equity - this means we celebrate family and cultural diversity and aim to be supportive, responsive, and inclusive of all children. ECMS is committed to:

- Ensuring children are only released into the care of individuals authorised by parents/guardians
- Obtaining, recording, and verifying written authorisations for key activities
- Refusing authorisations that do not meet legal or safety standards
- Promoting the safety and wellbeing of every child at all times
- Ensuring delivery and collection processes are clear, consistent, and compliant

Written Authorisations

Written authorisation from a parent/guardian or authorised nominee is required for:

- Administration of medication (Regulation 93)
- Excursions (Regulation 102)
- Emergency medical attention
- Collection by someone other than the parent/guardian
- Special circumstances such as self-administration of medication (Regulation 96)

Services must:

- Ensure authorisation forms are signed, dated, and stored securely
- Verify the identity of authorised nominees upon collection
- Refuse authorisations that are incomplete, invalid, or do not align with court orders or the child's best interests

Delivery and Collection Procedures

Arrival:

- A parent/guardian or authorised nominee must sign the child into the service each day.
- Children are not to be left at the entrance or allowed to walk in alone.

Departure:

- Only authorised individuals may collect a child.
- Authorised individuals must be listed on the enrolment form or provide valid written authorisation.
- Identification and/or Working with Children Check (WWCC) may be requested.
- Staff must ensure the person collecting matches the authorisation on file.

Inappropriate or Unauthorised Attempt to Collect:

- If an unauthorised person attempts to collect a child, staff will:
 - Contact the parent/guardian immediately
 - Refuse release of the child unless written or legal authorisation is provided
 - Contact police if necessary

Split Families and Court Orders:

- ECMS services will comply with all current court orders on file
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide updated legal documentation
- All staff will be briefed on court orders relevant to child collection

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Roles & Responsibilities

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| Chief Executive Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Holds ultimate accountability for policy implementation and compliance. |
| Director of ECE | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oversee policy governance, implementation and compliance. |
| Area Managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure service-level implementation and monitoring |
| Nominated Supervisors / Centre Directors | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verify written authorisations• Refuse or escalate questionable authorisations• Maintain records and communicate with families about collection protocols |
| Educators, Volunteers, Students on Placement, and Contractors | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure children are only collected by authorised persons• Follow all delivery and collection procedures• Inform leadership of any incidents or concerns |
| Parents/Guardians | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete and update enrolment records with authorised nominees• Provide timely, written authorisation for alternative collectors or activities• Sign children in and out of the service each day |

Record-keeping

- Authorisation and collection records are kept in accordance with ECMS retention procedures
- Visitor logs and incident reports are maintained and reviewed regularly

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if legislation or organisational practice changes. The Director, Education is responsible for ensuring timely review and consultation.

Related Legislation, Regulations and Resources

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 155, 165, 167, 175

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- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 92, 93, 96, 99, 100, 101, 102, 160, 161, 168, 170, 173
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)
- Child Safe Standards (Victoria) - Standard 2
- National Quality Standard (NQS) Quality Area 2: Children's Health & Safety

Related Policies and Procedures

- Child Health and Hygiene Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints and Feedback Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Excursion/Regular Outing Policy
- Parent Involvement and Participation Policy
- Participation of Students and Volunteers Policy
- Privacy and Confidential Information Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy

Supporting Procedures

- Excursion/Regular Outing Procedure
- Supervision Risk Management Procedure

Supporting Documents

- Risk Management Plan & Assessment Template

| Document Version History | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Version | Reason for Amendment | Approved by | Approval date |
| 1.0 | Policy merged, drafted and approved | ECMS Executive | July 2025 |

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