



**Umbrella Family and
Child Centres of Hamilton**

5.2 SAFE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE POLICY

MANUAL	Child Care Centre Program Policy Manual
SECTION	5- Safety
POLICY	5.2 Safe Arrival and Departure Policy
LAST REVISED	June 19, 2024

RATIONALE

UFCC staff members are committed to children's safety both physically and emotionally. Safe arrival and departure procedures support best practices for both staff and families as children make the transition to and from the child care program each day. Our procedures follow the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

RESPONSIBILITY

Parents and all staff.

PROCEDURE

Drop Off and Pick Up of Children

- Parents will bring their children into the centre at the beginning of the day.
- The receiving staff member will greet the parents and child, ensure the child is well enough to participate in the program and mark the child present on the attendance list noting the time of arrival.
- If a child is not physically well enough to participate in the program or they are returning before the exclusion period for a contagious illness, vomiting and/or diarrhea the staff will ask the parent to keep their child home until they have fully recovered. Refer to the detailed procedures in the Illnesses/Accidents policy in the CCC Program Policy manual.
- The receiving staff member will ask the parent/guardian if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure. 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 as an authorized pick up or emergency contact. Where the individual is not listed, the parent/guardian must provide authorization for pick-up in writing.
- Document any changes to pick-up in the Daily Journal.
- At the end of the day, the parent will come into the centre to pick up the child. Staff will be available to provide a brief update regarding the child's day, as well as answer any questions the parent(s) may have. Staff will record the child's departure time on the Attendance Form.
- Staff will check photo identification of any person picking up a child at the child care centre, until they become familiar.



Taking Attendance

- Designated staff will take attendance as the children arrive using the most current attendance pages.
- If a child has not arrived to a Full Day program or Before care, please follow the procedures under "Arrival to Program." If a child does not arrive to aftercare, please follow the procedures under "Child Missing from Extended Day Program."
- When children arrive and you are face to face with the child, write the time of arrival in the box that is beside/across from the child's name.
- If a child is visiting from another group, write the child's name at the end of attendance and mark "visiting" beside the name. Write the time the child arrived and departed from care.
- When a child is participating in a play visit, their name will be added to the bottom of the attendance sheet to make staff members are always aware of the number of children in the room.
- All absences for any reason should be noted in the Daily Journal.
- If a child is absent (confirmed by parent phone call, email, app communication, or checking school attendance) staff will mark A on the attendance.
- If a child is sick, staff will mark S on the attendance.
- If a child is on vacation, staff will mark V on the attendance.
- Days on the attendance that are shaded with a colour indicate that the child is not scheduled to attend that day.

Arrival to Program

- Where a child has not arrived in care to a full day program as expected and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off, the following must occur:
 - Inform the Program Supervisor or Program Leader.
 - Staff must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:00 am. Staff shall communicate with the parent/guardians via phone call, text message/email, or through the program's communication app to confirm the absence of the child.
 - After 30 minutes of attempting to contact the parent/guardian, if no response is received, must contact a listed emergency contact (on the child's registration form), to confirm absence.
 - If an adult has still not confirmed the absence of the child by 11:00 am, the Program Manager will be contacted to advise next steps.
- 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 Journal.
- **Where a child who is expected before school, but does not arrive by ringing of the bell, signaling the start of school, and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off, the following must occur:**



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- Inform the Program Supervisor or Program Leader.
- Staff must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 15 minutes after the school bell rings to signal the start of school. Staff shall communicate with the parent/guardians via phone call, text message/email, or through the program's communication app to confirm the absence of the child.
- If contact is not made within 15 minutes, the staff shall contact the school personnel to inquire if the child has arrived at school or if an absence was communicated to them by an adult.
- After 30 minutes of attempting to contact the parent/guardian, if no response is received, must contact a listed emergency contact (on the child's registration form), to confirm absence.
- If an adult has still not confirmed the absence of the child by 11:00 am, the Program Manager will be contacted to advise next steps.
- 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 Journal.

Child Missing from Extended Day Program

For any child who is expected after school, but does not arrive within the first five minutes of the bell ringing to signal school dismissal, begin to initiate these steps:

- Notify the Supervisor that you require assistance. If the Supervisor is not available, call the Program Leader. The Supervisor or Program Leader may be able to take over looking for the child.
- Check the hallways of the school or in other program rooms in case the child has reported to the wrong room. (Other children in the program may be able to provide information regarding a child's whereabouts but this should be treated only as another place to look. We cannot take a child's word for this and need to continue looking until we find the child.)
- Check the bus lines to see if the child went to the bus by accident. If the busses have left, ask the school secretary to call the bus company to inquire if the child went on the bus by accident.
- If the child was at school and was NOT picked up, ask the school secretary to page the child or inquire with the child's teacher to see if the child's whereabouts are known.
- Ratios must be maintained during the search; if necessary, take these steps using the walkie-talkies, phone or cell phone.
- Strive to remain calm in front of the other children and when talking to parents; if possible, have another UFCC staff remain with the children while you make the calls in a separate area.

Note: All of these steps must be taken, but not necessarily in this order. Different staff may be assigned to follow up on different tasks, as they are able, and report back to the main person who is heading up the search. Speed is of the essence in locating any missing child.



Calls to Police Department and Parents

If the child is not located within ten minutes from the time the school dismissal bell and you have taken the steps above:

- Call the parents at home or work to notify them that the child has not arrived. Ask if the parent is aware of child's whereabouts.
- Call the Police Department and advise them that a child is missing; request their assistance in locating the child. Have the child's Registration Form and picture available to share with police.
- As soon as reasonably possible following the call to the police, the Supervisor or Program Leader in charge must notify the Program Manager.
- If the parent, Supervisor or Program Manager cannot be reached, notify Head Office immediately at 905-312-9836.

Extended Day Programs

- Children attending the on-site school will transition directly from school to child care.
- Staff will share the transition plans for each age group with parents upon enrollment or at the beginning of the school year.
- Each centre will develop transition plans with their school.

Prior to School Dismissal

- Designated staff will check with the school office to obtain the names of any children who were absent from school that day, who were picked up early by a parent or their designate, or who the school was advised should go home on the school bus.
- Designated staff will check the Daily Journal and voice mail for messages.

Adults Authorized to Pick Up Children

- Parents will discuss their child care needs with centre staff during the enrollment process and identify the people who will be responsible for the arrival and departure of their child(ren) on the Registration Form, including alternate adults who may hold this responsibility on occasion.
- If someone other than the parent or authorized person is to pick up the child, staff must be notified in advance, in writing. In case of emergency, staff may be notified by telephone when an alternate person will be picking up the child.
- Designated persons picking up a child will be required to show identification until staff become familiar with them.
- UFCC staff members are required to follow current custody orders when releasing children. Families are asked to work with the centre Supervisor to ensure the information on file is up to date.



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- Should the person picking up the child demonstrate behaviour that suggests the individual may be impaired and is planning to drive with the child or does not appear capable of caring for the child, the staff member will call one of the child's emergency contacts.
- Should the parent insist they are taking the child from the centre, the staff member will attempt to discourage the parent but will not prevent the child from leaving the centre. If the staff member is concerned for the child's safety, they will call the Children's Aid Society for advice on next steps.

Independent Departure

- Parents may authorize the centre to allow an older school age child (Grade 4 and up) to leave the centre at a predetermined time. The parent needs to provide written authorization in advance.
- Children with parent authorization for independent departure must sign themselves out of the centre. Staff will note time of departure and/or any parental direction in the Daily Journal.

Extra-Curricular School Activities

- Older school age children may want to participate in after school activities prior to returning to child care. Parents need to provide written authorization in advance of the activity.

Taxi Delivery or Pick Up

It is preferable that children are delivered by a parent or designate; however, it is understood that emergencies may occur. While it is essential we work with families based on their individual and unique needs, the child's safety must not be compromised.

Taxi Delivery of a Child:

If a child must be delivered to a UFCC program by taxi, the following procedures will apply:

- The parent will call the centre in advance of the child being sent in a taxi to alert them of the situation, and inform the centre of the driver's name, if available.
- The parent will inform the taxi driver that the child must be delivered directly to the child care centre staff.
- Staff may request to check the I.D. of the driver.
- UFCC accepts no responsibility for the child until a staff member has been notified in person of the child's arrival.

Taxi Pick Up of a Child:



In the event of an emergency which results in a parent arranging for a taxi to pick up his/her child, the following procedures will apply:

- The parent will first attempt to have a designate pick up the child and notify the centre of this situation.
- If the only alternative for pick up is a taxi, the parent will notify the centre of these arrangements.
- The parent will call the taxi company to arrange the time of the pick-up and to determine the name of the driver who will pick up the child.
- The parent will then call the centre back to confirm the time of pick up and the identity of the taxi driver.
- Before the child is released, the taxi driver must provide proof of identification to a staff member. UFCC accepts no responsibility for the child after the driver has assumed care of the child and has left the centre.

Late Pick Up

- If a child has not been picked up at the end of the day, staff will attempt to contact the parent and emergency contacts with the goal of developing a safe plan to have the child picked up.
- If more than an hour has passed and contact has not been made or there isn't a plan in place for safe pick up of the child, the Program Manager will be contacted for advice on next steps. (CAS may be contacted for advice on how to proceed.)
- Child care staff may not remove the child from the centre.
- Parents who are late picking up their child will be charged a late fee of \$5.00 per child, plus \$1.00 per child for every minute expired beyond the centre closing time. Supervisors will issue these fees via the child care billing app.

Policy Attachments: N/A