Child Care Policy and Procedure Manual	
Section 1: Health and Safety	**Policy:** Safe Arrival and Dismissal
Date Approved by P&P Cmte: December 1, 2023 **Date Approved by BofD:** December 5, 2023	**Policy #** 1.18

PURPOSE

To support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care at Bright Starts Co-operative Early Learning Centre Inc. (Bright Starts CELC) by providing staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children. This policy is required by and complies with section 50 of O. Reg 137/15 under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.

POLICY

- Bright Starts CELC will ensure that any child receiving care at the centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual for whom the parent/guardian has provided express written authorization to the centre for release of the child.
- Bright Starts CELC will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual who is 16 years of age or older. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, Bright Starts CELC must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
    - greet the parent/guardian and child.
    - should the parent/guardian indicate there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up), the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the child's vital information form or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).
    - document any changes in pick-up procedure in the daily written log book.
    - sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the centre and a parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., sent/left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), program staff must:
    - inform a Team Supervisor, Child Care Manager or Director and shall commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 2 hours after their regularly expected time of arrival. Program staff shall attempt to contact the parents/guardians by phone, email or sending a message through our programs communication app, (Lillio). Program staff are to attempt to make contact through all methods/leave messages.
        - should no response be received after 1 hour to confirm the child's absence, staff must inform a Team Supervisor, Child Care Manager or Director.
        - the Team Supervisor, Child Care Manager or Director will make an additional attempt to contact the child's parents/guardians and leave messages for them to contact the centre.
        - If a parent/guardian does not reply, program staff will follow up with the parent/guardian the next day the child is in attendance to confirm the reason for the absence.
2. Once the child's reason of absence has been confirmed, program staff shall confirm documentation of the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written log book.

Releasing a child from care

1. The program staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parents/guardians or individual that a parent/guardian has provided written authorization as indicated on the child's vital information form that the child may be released to. Where the program staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),
    - confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
    - where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's vital information form.
    - under unusual circumstances (stuck in traffic/no access to email, emergency centre evacuation) where a parent/guardian is unable to provide/Bright Starts CELC is unable to receive written authorization staff may accept verbal authorization.
        - Upon pick-up staff must require the individual to provide photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian's verbal authorization and record it in the daily written log book.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up within 30 minutes, program staff must;
    - inform a Team Supervisor, Child Care Manager or Director

- program staff will attempt to contact the parents/guardians by phone, email or sending a message through Lillio and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
- Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
- Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall wait until the centre closes and then refer to the procedures under "where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed".

Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 5:35PM, program staff will inform a Team Supervisor, Child Care Manager or Director and continue to engage in activities with the child and may offer a snack while they await their pick-up.
2. Program staff shall stay with the child, while the Team Supervisor, Child Care Manager or Director proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire about their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall contact by phone the parent/guardian first and then proceed to by phone contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
3. If the Team Supervisor, Child Care Manager or Director is unable to reach the parent/guardian or the authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, they shall begin contacting the child's emergency contacts/other authorized pick-up individuals as listed on the child's vital information form.
4. Where the Team Supervisor, Child Care Manager or Director is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any emergency contacts/other authorized pick-up individuals as listed on the child's vital information form by 6:00PM the staff shall proceed with contacting Waterloo Regional Family and Children's Services (FACS) at 519-576-0540 and follow the FACS's direction with respect to next steps.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

- Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized individual. Under no circumstances will children be released from care unsupervised.

Date of Issue/Revision	Description of Change	Approved By
December 5, 2023	Initial release	Board of Directors