

Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children

This policy outlines the protocols in relation to the collection of children from **Little stars on the lane**. **Little stars on the lane** shall only release children into the care of individuals who have been authorised by the parent(s)/guardian(s) to collect the child. This policy also includes the information and records required for each pre-school child, including children's attendance. This policy is available and communicated to all parents.

This policy has been updated in line with current guidance the [HSPC Infection Prevention and Control guidance for services providing childcare during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), the DCYA's [Return to Work Safely Protocol](#) and [Tusla's Children Services Regulations Guidance Document for Early Years Services: COVID-19](#)

Principle

This policy is underwritten by the the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 , The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendments) Regulations 2016. and Tusla's Quality and Regulatory Framework.

Policy:

Routine for drop-off and pick-up:

Little stars on the lane has established routines for drop-off and pick-up times to assist in transition of children into and out of the Service.

- On arrival at **Little stars on the lane** parents and children are greeted at the door of their care room. Children are welcomed in to the room by **Little stars on the lane** staff and their attendance is noted for our records.
- On departure, children are signed out by **Little stars on the lane** staff. Sign out is done in line with our Authorisation to Collect policy below.

Supervision when entering and leaving the service:

During collection and drop off times, each child is under the direct supervision of a staff member. During collection time it is ensured that the child leaves the premises in the care of their parent/guardian or a person nominated by their parent/guardian. Staff record in the attendance book the time and their initials, when the child arrives in and leaves the service.

Authorisation to collect a child:

On enrolment at **Little stars on the lane**, the following information is obtained for each child and retained in the service:

- The name and date of birth of the child.
- The date the child first attended the service.
- The name, address and telephone number of the person/s authorised by a parent or authorised nominee named in the child's record to collect the child from the premises.

- The relationship to the child of the persons authorised to collect the child from the premises.
- Details of any court ordered custody arrangements, or relevant legal evidence of individuals that are prohibited from collecting a child.
- The signature of the person providing authorisation.

All staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to accessing the Service and the authorisation process required prior to the collection of children from the Service.

Procedure when non-authorised person arrives to collect a child:

- In certain circumstances a parent may need to arrange a person other than those authorized in the application form to pick up their child. If the parent has to organise this arrangement with **Little stars on the lane** over the phone and staff are not convinced of the authenticity of the caller's identification, they will contact the parent under the contact number provided on the application form. The parent will be asked to sign a notification form taken by staff for this arrangement as soon as possible.
- To add another person to the list of people authorised for collection, the parent has to do so in writing.
- This is a key requirement for the protection and welfare of the child. If for any reason, **Little stars on the lane** Staff feel the arrangement is not in the interest of the child's welfare, the parent will be contacted, and the child will remain in the care of **Little stars on the lane** until the situation is resolved.

Late collections:

- Where a parent knows they will be late collecting their child after the agreed time, they are required to consult with the service to make alternative arrangements.
- No fees are applied for late collections.
- If a child is not collected by a parent/ guardian by the agreed time, the service will contact the parent/ guardian or emergency contact persons.
- Regulations require two members of qualified staff to be present at all times when children are on premises.

When a child is not collected:

- If a child is not collected at the end working hours of **Little stars on the lane** and the service is unable to contact the parents/guardians and emergency contacts, after 1 hour the following procedures apply:
- The child will stay at the service in the care of at least 2 fully vetted staff members until the premises close, or staff are no longer available for the child.
- Staff will follow procedures outlined in the Child Protection Policy. Contact An Garda Síochána and other relevant agencies.

When person arrives to collect a child in an unfit state:

- The service will not release a child who is deemed to be at risk, if a parent or authorised person arrives at the service and staff are concerned that they are in an unfit state due to drugs or alcohol.
- Staff will explain to the parent or the authorised person who is unfit, why the child should not leave with them and offer to assist them by contacting the other parent or authorised person for collecting the child.
- If the parent/ guardian refuses assistance and insists on taking the child with them although the staff believe the child will be at risk, the manager or staff in charge will call An Garda Síochána immediately.

Little stars on the lane shall ensure that a record in writing is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child ceases to attend the service.

Procedure for authorisation of collections:

- If a child is to be collected by a person other than their parent prior signed parental permission must be in place.
- The parent should provide the name, address, contact number of the persons authorised to collect their children and state the relationship of this person to the child.
- Authorised persons must be over 18* years of age (unless exceptional circumstances dictate)
- When an authorised person is to collect a child, the parent must inform the setting beforehand on each occasion. (in person or by phone)
- Only persons named and authorised by the parent may collect a child.
- The setting should be informed if one parent does not have guardianship and access to the child.
- The setting should be informed immediately of any changes to those authorised to collect their child.
- If the person authorised to collect the child is unknown to the service staff may ask the individual to produce photographic identification as prove of identity.
- The name of the parent or guardian providing authorisation. The signature of the person providing authorisation. The date the authorisation is signed.
- Our staff are able to seek emergency medical assistance for a child as required without seeking further authorisation from a parent or guardian (i.e. medical practitioner, ambulance or hospital) including for those emergencies relating to asthma and anaphylaxis.
- Where a non-authorised individual arrives to collect a child, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) are not contactable, the Service will contact the Authorised Nominee(s) listed in the child's record.
- Where no authorised person arrives to collect a child, the Service attempts to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) and each Authorised Nominee listed in the child's record.

The service reserves the right to refuse entry to the service of any individual authorised or otherwise if it is determined that they pose a risk of harm to the safety, health and welfare of the service team and children. The service reserves the right to contact an alternative authorised contact on the child's record to collect, if they determine the authorised contact that has arrived could pose a risk to the child.

Procedure for Refusing Authorisation

The procedure for authorising collections is that parents name two people on the child's registration form when enrolling and then parents tell educators in advance each time an authorised person will be

collecting the child. In the instance that authorisation from a parent/guardian does not meet the requirements outlined the team member will:

- Immediately explain to the parent/guardian that their authorisation cannot be accepted, explaining why. Educators will guide the parent/guardian on how to meet the requirements.
- Ensure that the parent/guardian is provided with a copy of the relevant service policy and that they understand the reasons for the refusal of the authorisation if so required.
- Request that an appropriate alternative authorisation is provided by the parent/guardian that complies with the requirements of the relevant service policy.
- Ensure that procedures outlined in the relevant service policy are followed where a parent/guardian cannot be immediately contacted to provide an alternative written authorisation
- Follow up with the parent/guardian, where required, to ensure that an appropriate written authorisation is obtained.
- It is the responsibility of the Service to ensure that all authorisations adhere to the requirements.

Authorisation form:

Our child record form requires details for up to 2 persons authorised to collect a child (other than the parent) and also two nominated emergency contacts. **Little stars on the lane** will ensure that the following information on at least two authorised individuals is kept on file for each child.

- First name and surname
- Address
- Home, Work and Mobile Phone Number
- Relationship to child

Collections and Drop Offs During the COVID-19 Pandemic:

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and in the interests of public health and on the advice of the Health Protection Surveillance Centre, the following procedure will be used by Little stars on the lane until advised otherwise:

Emergency Contacts

- All parents/guardians will provide an additional emergency contact should an immediate collection be necessary should their child exhibit symptoms of COVID-19.

Procedures for Drop Off

- Parents/guardians and authorised collectors can no longer access Little stars on the lane for drop off and collections.
- Staggered times will be arranged for all drop offs and parents/guardians are designated a collection time when their child starts at Little stars on the lane, we ask that in the interests of social distancing all parents/guardians be mindful of their designated time.
- Where parents/guardians travel with their child by public transport, or by active travel, they will be asked to meet a staff member for drop off at [designated area]. All adults are asked to please respect social distancing markers and instructions.

- Where parents/guardians drop off their children by private car, they will be asked to remain in their car at [designated area] and their child will be collected from the car by a designated staff member of Little stars on the lane.
- We ask all parents/guardians to limit their interactions with staff and other parent/guardians.
- All parents/guardians should follow public health advice and follow social distancing advice and give all other waiting parent/guardians the recommended 2m distance.

Procedures for Collection

- As with Drop Offs, parents/guardians can not longer access Little stars on the lane for collections.
- Staggered times are in place for collections and parents/guardians are designated a collection time when their child starts at Little stars on the lane, we ask that in the interests of social distancing all parents/guardians be mindful of their designated time.
- Where parents/guardians travel with their child by public transport, or by active travel, they will be asked to wait to collect their child at [designated area], which is clearly marked. All adults are asked to please respect social distancing markers and instructions.
- Where parents/guardians collect their children by private car, they will be asked to remain in their car and wait for a designated staff member to meet them with their child.
- We ask all parents/guardians to limit their interactions with staff and other parent/guardians.
- All parents/guardians should follow public health advice and follow social distancing advice and give all other waiting parent/guardians the recommended 2m distance.

Collections for Children Exhibiting Symptoms of COVID-19

- Should a child at Little stars on the lane exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, their parents/guardians will be called and be asked to collect them immediately.
- If a parent/guardian cannot be reached at their provided phone numbers their emergency contacts will be called and asked to collect the child.
- Where parents/guardians travel with their child by public transport, or by active travel, they will be asked to wait to collect their child at [designated area], which is clearly marked. All adults are asked to please respect social distancing markers and instructions.
- Where parents/guardians collect their children by private car, they will be asked to remain in their car and wait for a designated staff member to meet them with their child.