

## **Policy No. 62 (B) – Drop off & collection Policy (School Aged Childcare-standard)**

**REV: 04 DATE: 10.08.2022**

*This policy is available to all our service users. It will be communicated through our website and also through the parental information disk that contains all our policies & procedures. There is also a copy of this policy in the reception area of our service and also on display (child friendly version) in the school age service rooms.*

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

**Scamps & Scholars** is committed to supporting each child's health and well-being. This policy describes the procedures carried out by the school age childcare service to ensure the safety of the children arriving and departing from **Scamps & Scholars**. The policy outlines the *role of the authorised person, procedures for collections and drop offs and unaccompanied school age children*.

This policy is available to all school age children, parents and guardians. Where necessary this policy is shared with the school the children in our care & that attend. The School Age Service review this policy regularly in collaboration with parents, school age children, and staff.

This policy should be viewed in line with other School Age Service policies including managing behaviour, accident and incident, complaints, recruitment, risk management and/or staff training policy.

### **Principle**

*Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Age Services) Regulations 2018*

### **GENERAL STATEMENT**

- The time when the School Age Service opens for drop off is detailed in the services statement and function policy.
- The School Age Service will seek prior & ongoing consent for each child to be collected and/or dropped to their named school. The School Age Service cannot collect and/or drop the School Age Child unless prior consent is in place.
- This School Age Service is available for children attending Scóil Mhuire National School in Killorglin.
- Where the School Age Service makes any changes to the drop off and/or collection procedure this is communicated with parents normally via email update. The updated policy will also be made available on our website.
- The normal time scale applies to any parent wishing to make changes to their child's attendance or uptake of this service. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school of absences, illness, short days and/or holidays where the child will not be attending.
- The School Age Service will work collaboratively with the school age child to ensure their voice is heard regarding the collection and dropping routine.
- The School Age Service specific authorised staff member(s) are responsible for drop-off and collection of school aged children. Only staff members authorised by management are allowed to drop-off and collect children for the school aged childcare service. Authorised staff members must be adequately trained and aware of the drop-off and collection procedure.

- The role of the Authorised Staff Member(s) for dropping and collection, is clearly understood by the School and Parent. The Authorised Person(s) is a paid employee with appropriate qualifications, Garda vetted & validated references. Their training may include First Aid Responder (FAR) and Children First.
- At the drop off or collection, where communication between the school and parent is required this procedure is in general between a designated school staff member, parent and a School Age Service staff member. *For example, illness, upcoming events, behaviour.*
- Child equipment including car seats and booster seats are **not** required for School Age Service children travelling by **bus**.
- The School Age Service and school will share information including the name of the Authorised Staff Member(s), contact details of the School Age Service, and the location of drop-off and collection. The School Age Service will notify the school where this information changes.
- Clear procedures are outlined in the case of an emergency occurring during the drop off or collection period and obtain written permission from parents/ guardians on admission to the service to seek/ administer emergency treatment for their child if it is needed.
- Scamps & Scholars are committed to adhere fully to an 11:1 ratio of children to staff.

### **Procedure for Drop-off & Collection**

At **Scamps & Scholars** we have established procedures for the drop off/collection of school aged children, to ensure a smooth transition and effective time keeping within our service. The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety and welfare of children by making sure that the responsibilities and expectations of all parties are clear when it comes to children being brought to and collected from school by **Scamps & Scholars**

### **Drop off at Scamps & Scholars**

- Children must be taken into the service and 'signed in' on arrival in the designated sign in book located in the Breakfast Club room.
- Children may avail of the breakfast club, which is inclusive of drop off to school from 7.30am onwards.
- Breakfast will be provided for those children that wish to avail of same.
- School Aged Children will not be left in the foyer at any time or left outside the service prior to the opening hours of the service.
- On arrival parents should inform the staff member that they are dropping their child to, of any information that is relevant to their child's day at school.
- To ensure effective time keeping children must arrive at **Scamps & Scholars** no later than 8.40am to avail of the bus service to the local primary school. **Scamps & Scholars** cannot delay the departure time to school for children who arrive late as it is our priority that all children arrive at school on time.
- School Age children returning to the service in the afternoon may bring one additional bag which can be stored within **Scamps & Scholars** to facilitate a change of clothing on return to the service and must be taken home by the child each day.

### **Ad hoc collections from School**

- Parents must clearly communicate collection needs with the **Scamps & Scholars** within an agreed timeframe for example staff meetings, half days, unexpected closures.
- The parent must provide the name of the School Aged Childcare to the school and advise them that the SAC service will be collecting the child.
- A collection point is agreed between the school, child, parents and School Age Service. Any changes to this must be agreed in advance.
- Authorised staff collecting children from school only leave **Scamps & Scholars** for collections when they have confirmed the names of all children to be collected on that day.
- The details of each collection are recorded. This includes the individual name of the child/young person(s), number of children being collected, name of Authorised Staff Member (and driver if applicable), time returning and/or any incidents.
- It is at the discretion of School Age Service to facilitate collections from out-of-school activities. These will be agreed with parents on a case by case basis bearing in mind the needs of all children attending the service, availability of personnel to facilitate collections etc.
- School Age children who are usually collected should not leave the school until the Authorised Person(s) arrives to collect them.
- School Age Children must ensure that they have all their belongings with them upon collection. Where items are forgotten, it is at the discretion of the School Age Service whether they can return to the school or not to retrieve them.
- School Age children are expected to follow the School Age Service's managing behaviour policy at all times.
- School Aged Children are supervised by the Authorised Staff Member from the time they are collected from the school.
- The bus service runs in the morning for school age children.
- The service collects children from Scamps and Scholars and drops them to the local primary school in Killorglin.
- For children to avail of this service, your child must be booked in and registered with Scamps and Scholars.
- Fees will be appropriated to this service directly or indirectly as a part of another service e.g. breakfast club.
- The service only operates to and from the local primary school in Killorglin town.
- We will only ever be able to accommodate a set number of children on this service as the bus and bus numbers will be defined by the pre-booked bus operating the service.
- The bus service is operated by a third-party contractor through Local Link Kerry.

### **Group Drop & Collections to & from designated school**

#### **Dropping off at School**

- Specific details are recorded by the **Scamps & Scholars** when the group are leaving the service to be dropped at school. This includes the name, number of children in the group, name of the Authorised Staff Member(s) (and driver if applicable), and/or time leaving. This is usually conducted through the roll book.

- Any changes that occur from the school collection book should be relayed to all staff on the school run. Changes that are communicated through a day or in advance will be recorded in the After School Collection diary and this should be checked for up to date information before leaving the building on a drop off or collection run.
- There are set times for leaving the School Age Service to ensure each child arrives at their school at the agreed time. This time is agreed between the School Age Service and the parent at the enrolment stage and the local primary school.
- The location and time where the Authorised Staff Member(s) drop the school aged children is agreed in partnership with the parent, child, School and School Age Service. Any changes will only be agreed in advance.
- School age children are encouraged to ensure all belongings are brought to the school before leaving the School Aged Childcare service. Where items are forgotten, it is at the discretion of the School Age Service to bring the child's belongings to the school or to call a parent to carry out this task.
- School Age children are expected to follow the School Age Service's managing behaviour policy at all times.
- Children are fully supervised by the Authorised Staff Member until the agreed drop off time.
- The school run mobile phone (which should be fully charged) should also be brought by one of the staff members.
- In the absence of this phone being operational you are requested to bring your own phone on the school run with you to facilitate communication with the centre if required.
- Children will be gathered in the entrance hall and staff will ensure that appropriate clothing is donned and that the children have their school bags and ancillary required items.
- Children will be lined up to exit the building to where the bus is located (at this time the Fexco carpark accessed via the adjoining pedestrian gate).
- Staff will adopt the normal approach for moving a body of children:



- If there are only two staff on the school run, which would be normal one staff member takes the lead position while the other staff member adopts the monitoring position.
- The lead staff member will ensure that the children access the bus safely and assist children to board where necessary.
- Once all children have been seated on the bus, both staff members will ensure that all children have their safety belts on and are secured properly.
- A role call will be taken to ensure that all children are accounted for.
- Staff will assume their seats and put on their seat belts – usually one at the back of the bus and one at the front of the bus.
- Children will be monitored by staff on the short journey to the school.
- On arrival at a designated location close to the school, the first staff member will exit the bus and stay at the door of the bus to supervise the children alighting same.

- The first staff member will ensure that children line up safely in a designated safe location (holding zone) adjacent to the bus until all children are off the bus.
- The second staff member will be the last person to exit the bus and will ensure that all children alight from the bus in a safe and appropriate manner.
- The second staff member will also ensure that no items are left on the bus.
- Once all children and the second staff member have alighted the bus and joined the remaining children at the holding zone, children will then proceed in a line to the school entrance.

This process is repeated for collection, with staff gathering the children at a holding zone in the school grounds or other agreed area, roll call is taken and children are walked to the bus in the manner previously outlined. Another roll call will be taken on the bus before the bus leaves for Scamps & Scholars.

### **Absent Children down for collection from school**

On occasion it may transpire that a child who is down for collection in particular is not present at the school for collection.

In these circumstances staff should contact the school office to see if:

- The child was in today and present at school
  - To see if the child went home early for any reason
  - To see if the child was collected by another person.
- Once the staff have carried out the above and if no satisfaction is forthcoming, then the staff members should use the school run phone to call the parents directly.
  - If contact is made and it is acknowledged that the child has been collected already then staff should proceed to move the rest of the children to the bus and complete the school run in the normal manner.
  - If it cannot be established that the child has been collected because we cannot get through to the parents, then a staff member should notify the school of this occurrence and also contact the centre and speak to the “person in charge” (PIC).
  - The PIC will guide the next course of action to be taken, in conjunction with the school.

### **Leaving unaccompanied**

- Where children are permitted to leave the school aged childcare service unaccompanied it is an agreement in writing, with the School Age Service and parent. A risk assessment is undertaken by the School Age Service to ensure, in so far as practical, the child’s health, safety and welfare.
- The School Age Service, *at any stage*, may re-examine and overrule this decision where it is in the best interest of the child. This will be clearly communicated with parents and the school aged child within an agreed timeframe.
- Staff in the relevant section are assigned responsibility for the checking in and out of unaccompanied school age children.

## Dropping and collecting from the School Aged Childcare Service at Scamps & Scholars

- Upon enrolment **Scamps & Scholars** requests that parents/guardians outline who they authorise to drop and collect their child to **Scamps & Scholars**.
- All persons authorised to collect school age children must be known to staff. We may request identification from authorised collectors if they have not dropped or collected from the service previously. We will not release a child to anyone who is not authorised without prior consent from the parent.
- If an unauthorised person arrives to collect a child from **Scamps & Scholars**, we will contact the parent straight away and we will keep the child in our care until the parent gives us consent to release the child and we have seen the identification of the person collecting.
- All authorised collectors must be over 16 years of age. In certain circumstances **Scamps & Scholars** can adjust this requirement for a family. We request that this is discussed directly with management.
- If an older school aged child is to walk home unaccompanied from the service, the parent will be required to sign a statement accepting full responsibility for their child/children's safety. It is the policy of the service not to allow children less than 12 years old to walk home unaccompanied. **Scamps & Scholars at any stage**, may re-examine and overrule this decision where it is in the best interest of the child. This will be clearly communicated with parents and the school aged child within an agreed timeframe.
- 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.
- When a parent is late and does not telephone the service, then a late fee will be charged as detailed in our fees policy.
- Two staff will remain on the premises with the child until the parent/guardian arrives to collect the child
- If a child is not collected by a parent after the agreed time the service will attempt to contact the parents or the emergency contact persons.
- If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day and the service is unable to contact both the parent and the emergency contacts, the following procedures apply;
  - A child will stay at the service in the care of two fully-vetted staff members until the premises close, or staff are no longer available to care for the child
  - Staff will follow procedures outlined in the Child Protection Policy. Contact Health Service Executive, Child Protection and Social Work Services
  - A full written report of the incident is recorded.
- A parent who has been denied access to a child through a court order will not be permitted on to the services premises. (A copy of a Court Order currently in place must be shown to the Manager). If any person who has been denied access becomes threatening and insists on attempting to remove a child from the service, the manager will call An Garda Síochána.
- 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 and will contact the other parent or a person from the emergency contact/s. If the parent refuses assistance and insists on taking the child with them and the staff believe the child will be at risk, the manager will call An Garda Síochána immediately.

## Role of Authorised Staff Member(s)

- The role of the Authorised Staff Member(s) must be clearly understood and respected by the School and Parent. The Authorised Staff Member(s) is the named person that undertakes drop off and collection for **Scamps & Scholars**.
- The managing behaviour policy will be adhered to by the Authorised Staff Member(s) at all times. No practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a school aged child whilst attending the service.
- The Authorised Staff Member(s) carries a charged and working mobile phone with network access, parent and guardian contact details and emergency contact details on each collection and drop off.
- The School Age Service policies must be understood by the Authorised Staff Member(s).
- The Authorised Staff Member(s) will clearly distinguishable by the School Age children at collection and/or drop off times. Children are aware of who the Authorised Staff Member(s) is.
- A risk assessment is carried by the Authorised Staff Member(s) for both dropping and collection of school age children on a regular basis.
- If there is an incident, it is recorded upon the arrival back to the School Age Service by the Authorised Staff Member(s). This will follow the School Age Services accident and incident policy.

## Transport

- The Adult:Child ratio used when transporting in a vehicle will be 1:12. The minimum ratio will be adhered to at all times.
- All children must wear a seatbelt in the **Scamps & Scholars** bus service. Child restraint systems including car seats and booster seats follow are/are not required for car/bus and will/will not be provided .
- The **Scamps & Scholars** has appropriate supervision in place on the transport. This is based on regulatory requirement and needs of the children using the transport.
- Safety procedures on the transport for all School Age Service meets the minimum standards set out in Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 1963 to 2006.
- Safety and welfare of the School Age children is paramount. In cases where driving is deemed as unsafe, **Scamps & Scholars** will notify the parents as soon as is possible and where possible agree alternative arrangements.
- Comprehensive insurance will be confirmed on all vehicles via local link services who contract a bus service on our behalf before they are used to transport any child on behalf of **Scamps & Scholars**

## Walking

Walking is currently only an exceptional mode of transporting children. It is not undertaken on a regular basis and will only be utilised in exceptional circumstances.

When walking is necessary the following protocols will apply:

- The Adult : Child ratio for walking is 1-5.
- High visibility jackets must be worn by the school age children and Authorised Staff Member(s).
- Appropriate clothing and footwear should be worn at all times. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure these are provided for their children.
- Safety and welfare of the School Age children is paramount. In cases where walking is deemed as unsafe, **Scamps & Scholars** will notify the parents as soon as is possible and where possible, agree alternative arrangements.
- Our insurance company is informed of our method of transporting children to/from school and our School Aged Childcare Service. Children utilising the bus drop off and collection service to and from school will be covered by the bus operators insurance (as well as Scamps insurance in specific circumstances) during this process.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Whilst independence is encouraged for each child, the safety and welfare of the school age children is paramount during arrival and/or collection times. Where possible we intend to keep the children in our care safe from harm at all times. However, should an incident occur we will:

- Firstly, reassure the injured child whilst making sure that the other children in our care are safe.
- Should the incident be minor then we can with prior permission administer basic first aid.
- Should the incident be more serious then we will call 999 and accompany the child to the hospital. Regardless of the severity of the injury, the child's parents will be notified immediately. If necessary, emergency backup cover will be contacted to cover the absent member of staff so that the uninjured children can be dropped off/collected.
- Other emergencies: Should any other emergency such as a child becoming ill on the way to school, then we will contact the child's parents immediately and ask that they be collected.
- If there is an incident or a child falls after they have been dropped off at the school, then the procedures of the school will apply. We cannot collect children from school in such circumstances.
- We will record all details in our accident and incident book and make these are available for parents to sign and provide a copy for parents.
- If the incident is significant we will inform Tusla, the local child protection agency (if necessary) and our insurance company as soon as possible.
- A risk assessment will be carried out following an incident/accident occurring.

### **Complaints**

If parents have any issues or concerns regarding drop off or collection procedures, they can speak to the authorised person (s) or any complaints in relation to drop off or collection can be made using our complaints policy.



**Person Responsible:** \_\_\_\_\_

**This policy was adopted on Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**On behalf of Management (Manager, Owner, Chairperson)**

**Review Date:**           **every 2 years**