

Ballina River Street Children's Centre

Enrolment and Orientation Policy

Policy Created Date: 23 rd October, 2013	Policy Review Date: 23 rd October, 2013
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Policy Statement

The enrolment process is open and equitable. Enrolments will be subject to priority of access guidelines as per the Early Childhood Education and Care Grants Program Funding Agreement for NSW.

Families will be oriented to the centre before their children attend. The orientation process is a time for educators to share information with families about how the centre operates and how the child is settling within the Centre. It is also a time for families to share information about the child and their expectations of the centre.

Rationale

Ballina River Street Children's Centre supports equal opportunity principles and considers that where possible it has an obligation to promote equal access to the centre it provides within the Australian Government Guidelines. BRSCC understands the importance of an orientation process that provides clear guidelines to families to help families and children to settle into the centre successfully, and requires that educators sensitively implement the policy to ensure the wellbeing of the child.

Strategies for Policy Implementation

- Equal Opportunity principles will be observed in relation to access to the centre for children, families and educators/staff. The centre's approach to equal opportunity is based on the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity. Children's rights and interests are paramount.

Enrolments

- Enrolment will be considered following completion of the Application for Preschool Waiting List form
- Children currently enrolled in the Centre (Preschool & Occasional Child Care) will be given appropriate priority of access into another group for subsequent years depending on the class group requested by the family and the age of the child.
- Enrolments will be accepted according to 'Priority of Access'. Parents/Guardians will be advised that families of children enrolled with lower priority access may be required to alter their days or attendance in order to provide a place for a higher priority child. The Nominated Supervisor will decide each enrolment on a case by case basis. These decisions may be based on the centres resources, limitations and a need for balance within groups.

Priority will be given to the following children; (not in any particular order of priority)

- a) a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- b) a child in the year before full-time school
- c) Children with siblings already attending the centre or children or children of staff members who are parents/guardians
- d) Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families

- e) Children in families on lower incomes (Health Care Cards)
- f) Children with a disability
- g) Children from culturally and Linguistically diverse backgrounds
- An **enrolment Form** must be completed by each enrolling family for each child. Where enrolling families are not fluent in English the enrolment interview will wherever possible be conducted in their primary language. On enrolment families will be given a Parent Handbook.
- At enrolment parents/guardians are encouraged to provide any further information about their child that will support continuity of care between home and the centre.
- Enrolment Forms will be updated annually or when a family's circumstances change, to ensure information is current and correct. Enrolment information will be kept in a confidential file. Access to this information is available only to the educator, nominated supervisor, parent/guardian and authorised officers.
- If a place is not immediately available at the centre the family may be put on a waiting list at this stage they will be asked to complete the waiting list application form. When a place becomes available the family will be contacted by the nominated supervisor and registration and enrolment may proceed.
- Management committee member's children will not be given special consideration above their own priority of access.
- Exclusion of children from the centre due to behaviour issues will only occur after all other avenues of communication and support have been exhausted and when:
 - Professional advice confirms a child is in psychological danger as a result of unusually prolonged inability to settle into care away from parents/guardians, or
 - A child puts the majority of children at risk through inappropriate behaviour(Also refer to Behaviour Management Policy)
 - For exclusion policy due to non-immunisation and infectious diseases refer to Health, Hygiene and Infectious Control.
- Subject to equal opportunity legislation, the centre reserves the right to exclude a child from the centre for any reason connected to the welfare of the child and the welfare of educators/staff and other children or families who use the centre.
- Children who are not enrolled must only be present at the centre on a temporary basis, and under the direct supervision of their parent/guardian or other responsible adult.

Orientation

- An enrolled place will be offered to a child by the Centre making contact with the child's family (in person, phone, email or by post).
- The centre will provide options for orientation to the centre for families which may include:
 - An orientation evening/meeting for new families to meet one another and the educators/staff in a relaxed atmosphere outside normal centre hours.
 - Inviting new families to visit the centre with their child at times that suit them, to familiarise families with the centre prior to the child's attendance,
 - Providing all new families with a conducted tour of the premises which will include introductions to other educators/staff, children and families at the centre, and highlights specific policies and procedures that families need to know about the centre.
 - Ensuring families have a copy of the Parent Handbook and an opportunity to have any questions answered,
 - Giving family members the opportunity to stay with their child during the settling in process,

- Ensuring all new families are encouraged to share information about their child and any concerns, doubts or anxieties they may have in regards to enrolling their child at the centre,
- When children first attend the centre the needs of both families and children will be respected. Parents/Guardians will be encouraged to remain with their child when delivering or collecting them for as long a period as the parent/guardian and/or educators feel may be necessary to ensure the child's wellbeing. The parent/guardian will be encouraged to telephone the Centre during the day for reassurance that their child has settled in. Educators will make a special point of discussing the child's day with the family when they come to collect the child.
- Families will be assisted to develop a routine for saying goodbye to their child.
- Children who are distressed at separation from their family will be comforted by an educator, and closely observed and offered reassurance until they are settled.
- BRSCC will always consider the feelings and time constraints that families may have in regard to participating in orientation processes and aim to make the experience a positive and welcoming introduction to the centre.

Occasional Child Care – enrolment information

- Enrolment may occur following:
 - An inquiry being made by the child's family by phone, email or in person to the centre
 - Completion of the Application for Occasional Child Care Waiting List form
- Enrolment will include completion of the Enrolment package before leaving the child at the centre.
- The process for placement in Occasional Child Care is for families to make a booking for the child for the hours of care needed or desired, up to 1 week in advance. Extenuating circumstances may present with the need to make a booking more than 1 week in advance. This may be done with approval of the Centre Director in collaboration with the Lead educator.
- Families will be encouraged to use other times during the day if the time they are seeking is not available.

Sources:

- DEEWR Child Care Service Handbook 2011-2012 – retrieved 9 May, 2012, from www.deewr.gov.au
- UNICEF (n.d). **Fact Sheet: A summary of the rights under the convention on the Rights of the Child**. Retrieved 19th April 2011, from http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/rights_overview.pdf
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA). (2005). The Code Of Ethics- Retrieved 19 April 2011, from http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/code_of_ethics/early_childhood_australias_code_of_ethics.html
- PSC National Alliance retrieved 31 July 2012 from, www.pscalliance.org.au

Signed by the representative of the management committee

Name: Signature.....

Date:

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 – 175

Education and Care services national Regulations: 75; 88; 102; 168(2)(k); 169-175; 177-181

National Quality Standard – Element 4.2.1; element 6.1.1; element 7.3.1; element 7.3.3

Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – Practice: Holistic approaches, Responsiveness to children – Outcomes: 1