

ORIENTATION OF FAMILIES

Enrolment and orientation to any Early Education and Care Service is an exciting and sometimes, an emotional time for children and families. It is important to manage this time with sensitivity and support, building partnerships between families and the Preschool and importantly, trust with the child. Such partnerships enable the Preschool and families to work toward the common goal of promoting consistent quality outcomes for individual children and the Preschool.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in their service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.3	Community and engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
183	Storage of records and other documents

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of Medication Policy	Delivery of Children to, and Collection from EEC
Anaphylaxis Management Policy	Service Premises Policy
Asthma Management Policy	Enrolment Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Code of Conduct Policy	Payment of Fees Policy
	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
	Sick Children Policy

PURPOSE

We aim to ensure children and families are provided with an orientation procedure that allows the family to transition into the Preschool positively and well-informed, meeting the children and families' individual needs. We strive to establish respectful and supportive relationships between families and the Preschool to promote positive outcomes for children whilst adhering to legislative requirements.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and visitors of the Preschool.

IMPLEMENTATION

Orientation is an important process for children, families and educators to gain vital information about the individual child's needs, interests and strengths. To enable children to feel safe and secure, and to set the foundations for a trusting partnership, we feel that it is necessary for the family to attend an orientation visit. This visit, or visits, assist the child to adjust to a new setting and helps to make the transition from home to the Preschool a smooth and positive experience.

During orientation, educators will discuss the following in order to gain a better understanding in supporting the family:

- the cultural and/or linguistic background for families from non-English speaking backgrounds (external support may be required)
- days of attendance, Room allocation and times the preschool is open
- the family's previous knowledge or experience of other children's services
- any additional needs of the child and/or their family
- any court orders, parenting orders that are applicable to the child
- Preschool philosophy and curriculum
- the child's interests

- family goals and expectations
- any allergies or dietary needs for the child
- emergency or health care plans for the child if relevant
- the Preschool and room routines.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE:

- the orientation process is well organised, flexible, and informative
- the child and family visit the Preschool and familiarise themselves with the environment. The child may participate in the activities and experiences if they feel comfortable.
- the family and child/children are introduced to the teacher and educators in the room
- to create a welcoming environment and interact positively with the child and family
- the child and family are respected at all times, acknowledging the individuality of each parenting style
- families are encouraged to ring, email, or visit the Preschool as often as they like when their child has commenced care
- families are reassured that if the child is distressed over a long period of time the educators will contact them
- support agencies are contacted for children with additional needs
- families know how to provide feedback
- families are informed that critical information from their child's enrolment form is communicated with educators- (emergency contacts, authorised nominees, court orders, immunisation status, medical and health conditions where relevant)

TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS WILL:

- greet children and families upon arrival
- create a welcoming and inviting environment
- discuss with families the best transition process for their child
- encourage families to stay as long as they need to in order to reassure their child
- encourage families to say good-bye to the child when dropping off
- phone families if the child remains distressed
- seek information about the child and family throughout the orientation process

DURING THE ORIENTATION OF THE PRESCHOOL, FAMILIES WILL BE:

- provided with the Preschool enrolment form to be completed (assistance to complete this form is available if required)
- provided with an outline of the Preschool policies, which will include payment of fees, sun safety, incident, injury, trauma and illness and medical authorisation.
- advised of the enrolment administration fee
- provided with information about the NSW Department of Education fee arrangements
- provided with a Family Handbook
- asked to provide their child's immunisation history statement when enrolling their child- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register
- shown the signing in/out process
- provided with information about the software app Story Park that is used to communicate with families – daily program or children's observations
- advised of appropriate clothing for the child to wear to the Preschool, including appropriate shoes
- advised of what the child will be required to bring each day (water bottle, hat, change of clothes, lunch box)
- informed about policies regarding children bringing in toys from home
- informed about wearing sun safe hats and application of sunscreen
- introduced to the child's teacher and educators
- taken on a tour around the Preschool
- shown where children's belongings will be kept each day
- informed about meal times, lunchbox snacks and drinks provided by families
- required to discuss medical management plans and allergies (if applicable)
- introduced to the room routine and Preschool program. This includes portfolios and the observation cycle.
- informed about communication methods including meetings, interviews, newsletters, emails etc.
- invited to set family goals for their child
- asked to confirm their preferred method of communication.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP

Once the child has attended the Preschool for a few days, educators will ensure they:

- speak directly with the family to ask how their child and the family has settled into the routine of childcare
- welcome any questions or concerns the family may have

- provide information to the family of how their child has settled in these early days (interests, friends, songs they like to sing, craft activities etc.)
- request families to offer suggestions of how the Preschool could improve the orientation process.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Orientation of Families Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

SOURCES

Australia Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government Department of Education (2009). *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia*.

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2018)

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2020).

Revised National Quality Standard (2018).

The Australian parenting website Raising children

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/play-learning/preschool/starting-preschool>

Childcare Centre Desktop - www.childcarecentredesktop.com.au

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Maxine Smith	Director	November 2023
POLICY REVIEWED	NOVEMBER 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	NOVEMBER 2023
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual policy maintenance • minor formatting edits within text • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • continuous improvement/reflection section added 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
NOVEMBER 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed- no major changes • sources checked for currency 		NOVEMBER 2022