

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY



Purpose

To ensure that each child's enrolment is completed as per our legal requirements. Additionally, we aim to ensure that each child and family receives an enrolment and orientation process that meets their needs, allowing the family and child to feel safe and secure in the level of care that we provide.

Procedure

Waiting List

Our service has a waitlist which is for families who do not need care straight away but would like care at the service in the future. Families are required to fill out a waitlist form which will be available in the foyer of the childcare service. There is a waitlist priority for siblings of the children already enrolled in the service and children already attending.

Enrolment

The Federal Government has determined priority of access guidelines for allocating places in a government funded childcare service. Though this is not a requirement, many services choose to use this guideline as part of their enrolment process.

1. Priority 1: A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
2. Priority 2: A child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work/training/study test, under Section 14 of the Family Assistance Act.
3. Priority 3: Any other child.

Within each priority mentioned above, the following children are to be given priority:

- Children in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families
- Children and families which include a person with a disability
- Children in families which include a person with an individual whose taxable income percentage under Clause 7 of Schedule 2 to the Family Assistance Act is 100%
- Children in families with a non-English speaking background
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents.

Parents/guardians will be advised that families of children enrolled with third priority access (eg. Child Protection Cases) may be required to alter their days or leave the service in order to provide a place for a higher priority child.

All children are enrolled on a calendar year cycle. All enrolments will be reviewed by October for the following year. The review should cover all children enrolled at the service that are not going to school the following year.

Enrolment Form

Each family is required to provide the service with a completed enrolment form and accompanying documents (eg. immunisation history statement) to complete enrolment. Where enrolling families are not fluent in English the enrolment meeting will, wherever possible be conducted in the families primary language. At enrolment parents are encouraged to provide any further information about their child that will support continuity of care between home and the service.

The enrolment record will include but not limited to **(National Regulation 160)**:

- Full name, date of birth and address of the child.
- Name, address and contact details of each parent of the child; any emergency contacts; any person nominated by the parent to collect the child from the service; any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or to authorise administration of medication to the child; any person authorised to give approval for an educator to take the child out of the service.
- Details of court orders, parenting orders or plans.
- Language used in the child's home.
- Cultural background of the child and child's parents.
- Any special considerations for the child (e.g. cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional need).
- Authorisations for our service to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service, and transportation of the child by an ambulance service.
- Details of any specific health care needs of the child including any medical condition.
- Details of any allergies, dietary requirements and or anaphylaxis diagnosis.
- Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis/asthma/diabetic management or risk minimisation plan.
- Immunisation status of the child.

A Privacy Statement attached to the enrolment form which details:

- the name and contact details of the service
- the fact that enrolling parents/guardians are able to gain access to their information
- why the information is collected
- the organisations to which the information may be disclosed
- any law that requires the particular information to be collected
- the main consequences for not providing the required information.

Enrolment Forms may be updated annually or when a family's circumstances change, to ensure information is current and correct.

On acceptance of a position for a child at the service, parents must arrange for an orientation visit

- Parents will be given an enrolment package including: enrolment form, direct debit form, CCS information, excursion permission forms, social media permission forms, parent handbook, yearly events calendar.
- The child will have the opportunity to explore the room in which they will be placed to get to know their surroundings and educators.
- The parents and child will be given the opportunity to ask as many questions as they like about the service's routines, policies and procedures. Parents will be asked to share any information about their child's individual needs, eg allergies, interests, etc. with the room leader.
- The parent will be shown how to sign their child/ren in and out of the service each day, the location of their communication pocket, the day book, the location of their child's portfolio, urged to apply sunscreen to their child when they sign-in each day and invited to give suggestions for and feedback about the daily program.
- The Nominated Supervisor will encourage parents to ring the service when their child is attending as many times as they like to check on how they are settling in, to receive reassurance about the care their child is receiving.

Parenting Order

The National Regulations requires our service to have details of all custodial and access arrangements (**National Regulation 160(c)(d)**).

- Enrolling family members are responsible for informing the Director of custody and access arrangements on enrolment, and must advise the Director immediately of any subsequent alterations to these arrangements.
- All relevant legal documentation is to be shown to the Director and a copy will be maintained in the child's enrolment record.

Orientation

We believe orientation is an important process where educators are able to get important information about the new child's needs and those of the family. This process helps to make the transition from home to care as smooth as possible with the aim to maintain continuity between home and the service, which helps the child adjust to the new setting. The family will be encouraged to remain with their child when delivering or collecting them for as long a period deemed to be necessary to ensure the child's wellbeing.

We 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 service which generally goes for approximately two hours.

Our service will provide options for orientation to the education and care service for families which includes:

- Invite new families to visit the service with their child at times that suit them, to familiarise families with the service prior to the child's attendance. Factors for consideration at arranging these times are the child's sleep needs, parents' working hours and specific individual needs of the child. Other family or friends who are nominated by the family as being authorised to collect the child may also attend on these visits.
- Provide all new families with a tour of the premises which will include introductions to educators, children and highlights of specific policies and procedures that families need to know about our service.
- Ensure each family has a copy of the Family Handbook and an opportunity to have any questions answered.
- Support family members the opportunity to stay with their child during the settling in process.
- Ensure all new families are encouraged to share information about their child and any concerns, doubts or anxieties they may have in regard to enrolling their child at the service.

Commencing Care

Prior to the commencement of the enrolment a Complying Written Agreement (CWA) is required to be signed by the account holder, being a formal written agreement between the account holder and service regarding the details of enrolment. The CWA must be provided to receive government Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Termination of Enrolment

4 weeks' notice must be given by parents when they are planning on withdrawing their child from the service. If a child is withdrawn in the six weeks prior to our December closing date, fees will be incurred until the centre's final date of operation for the year, regardless of whether 4 weeks fees have been given or not.

Parents who are more than 2 weeks in arrears with their fees will be issued with a reminder statement which must be paid immediately. Parents are encouraged to negotiate payment of the fees if they are experiencing financial difficulties with the service's Director. If after negotiating payment plans, parents still fail to pay the outstanding bill, their child's place will be terminated and legal advice sought to recover the unpaid fees. The legal fees will be added to the unpaid account.

Responsibilities of the Approved Provider

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations with regard to the delivery and collection of children at all times **(National Regulation 99)**.
- Provide opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and staff) for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program.
- Ensure that enrolment forms comply with the requirements **(National Regulations 160-162)**.
- Ensure that enrolment records are stored in a safe and secure place, and are kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service **(National Regulation 181, 183)**.

- Ensure that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or staff under the Law.

Responsibilities of the Nominated Supervisor

- Provide enrolment application forms.
- Maintain a waiting list.
- Collecting, receipting and banking enrolment fees.
- Offer places in line with this policy and the criteria for priority of access.
- Providing relevant paperwork to families' in accordance with this policy.
- Store completed enrolment application forms in a lockable file in a secure place.

Responsibilities of the Educators

- Act in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy.
- Respond to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required.
- Ensure that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service.
- Ensure that the parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or staff under the Law **(National Regulation 157)**.
- Develop strategies to assist new families to:
 - Feel welcome into the service
 - Become familiar with service policies and procedures;
 - To develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child.
- Provide comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members.
- Share information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress with regard to settling in to the service.

Responsibilities of the Family

- Read and comply with this policy at all times.
- You must provide the service with all required documents before you are considered enrolled in the service.
- To ensure a smooth transition between home and the service, be sure to communicate your child's/family needs as clear as possible.
- Children must be immunised or on a catch up schedule or have a medical exemption and provide the service with this information to enrol into the service.

Related Statutory Obligations & Considerations

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) - www.acacqa.gov.au

Child Care Benefit www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/child-care-benefit

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/acts/2010-104.pdf>

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653>

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2017C00283>

Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)

Family Assistance Law www.dss.gov.au

Related Telephone Numbers

- Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate 1800 619 113

Amendment History

Version	Amendment	Short Description
1.7.2018	Inclusion of enrolment requirements	Clarification of new processes required for enrolments following the transition to the CCS.

This policy will be updated to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements every year. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulation*, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.

Date: 2nd July 2018

Version: 1.7.2018

Last Amended By: Heather Sheridan

Next Review: July 2019

Position: Nominated Supervisor
