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 Service and importantly, trust with the child. Such partnerships enable the Service and families to work toward the common goal of promoting consistent quality outcomes for individual children and the Service.

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

PURPOSE

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

SCOPE

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

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 for some time at the start. If the family decide to leave the room, families must stay on site while their child is on orientation. This visit, or visits, assist the child to adjust to a new setting and helps to make the transition from home to the Service 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)
- the family's needs in relation to work or other commitments
- days and times child care is required
- 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

- service 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 Service and room routines.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE:

- educators, staff, students and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy
- families are aware of this *Orientation of Families Policy*
- the orientation process is well organised, flexible, and informative
- the child and family visit the Service 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 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 Service 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)

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 SERVICE, FAMILIES WILL BE:

- provided with the Service enrolment form to be completed (assistance to complete this form is available if required) if not already completed.
- provided with an outline of the Service policies, which will include payment of fees, sun safety, incident, injury, trauma and illness and medical authorisation.
- advised of the enrolment bond
- provided with information about Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and myGov website
- 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 our Service uses for CCS – Smart Central, communication with parents – Kindyhub, Payment of Fees – ChildCare Easy Pay
- advised of appropriate clothing for the child to wear to the Service, including appropriate shoes
- advised of what the child will be required to bring each day (water bottle, hat, change of clothes)
- 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 educators
- taken on a tour around the Service
- shown where children's belongings will be kept each day
- informed about meals, snacks and drinks provided by the Service
- required to discuss medical management plans and allergies (if applicable)
- informed about how our Service embed the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations including the adoption of the National Model Code and Guidelines
- introduced to the room routine and Service program. This includes 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.

ROOM TRANSITION- Moving up and moving on

When children transition to a new age group or room at the end of the year or when developmentally appropriate, our Service ensures we provide information to parents and families and opportunities for

the child to become orientated to their new educators, environments and peers towards the end of the year.

We encourage parents and families to ask questions to support their child's transition and overcome any potential anxiety.

- Children will only be transitioned when they are ready in all aspects of their development and in accordance with their age
- Room transitions will occur when there is a vacant position for the child
- Management will consult with families when a child is transitioning to the next room, discussing their expectations and requirement to ensure the child settles into their new environment.
- Management and educators aim to ensure the transition between rooms is positive and smooth, communicating with families about how the transition is progressing.
- Management will invite families to information evenings/meetings to discuss room transitions at key times in the year.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP

Once the child has attended the Service 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 Service could improve the orientation process (provide families with an Orientation Survey to complete).

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

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). *Taking Images and Video of Children While Providing Early Childhood Education and Care. Guidelines For The National Model Code*

Australian Government Department of Education. *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0, 2022*

The Australian parenting website Raising children
https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/play-learning/preschool/starting-preschool

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Krystle Hills	Centre Manager	11/02/2025
POLICY REVIEWED	February 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	February 2026
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy maintenance • additional related policies added • inclusion of National Model Code and guidelines (not mandatory) • sources checked for currency and updated as required		

POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
NOVEMBER 2023	• annual policy maintenance • updated sources as required	NOVEMBER 2024