



## **Enrolment and Orientation Policy**

### **Introduction:**

Enrolment and orientation procedures form the foundation for strong relationships between families and our preschool and promote a quality experience of education and care for children.

Our centre procedures include consistent information around service operation and authorisations promoting compliance and a safe, secure and inclusive environment for children and families.

### **Aim:**

Our service will implement a process to ensure enrolment and orientation processes are planned and implemented to meet the needs of the child and family as well as ensuring all legislative requirements, including the Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines are adhered to.

We will ensure:

- ◁ Children are provided with support and comfort to settle into the service and establish new friendships and relationships;
- ◁ A thoughtful process is planned in consultation with families, to assist in separating from their child;
- ◁ Educators are provided with a clearly explained enrolment process; time to get to know families before children start; strategies to support families in introducing children to our service, time to develop close professional relationships with families; support from referral agencies; and information about custodial issues;
- ◁ Home language, cultural background and family priorities are considered at all times during the process.

### **Implementation:**

#### **Pre-enrolment**

Our preschool welcomes visits from prospective families and children. The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person may provide the visiting family with information that may include:

- service philosophy and curriculum;
- introduction to educators and staff;
- the physical environment;
- administrative matters, cost, and fee payment methods;
- how to provide feedback.

#### **Waiting List**

Following a pre-enrolment visit or phone conversation a family may wish to place their child's name on the waiting list. After consideration of access guidelines and availability of a position by the Nominated Supervisor, the child/ren may be offered a position at the centre.

The family may accept an offer of the position in person or by phone and the enrolment will be confirmed by completing the enrolment process.

#### **Enrolment**

The Nominated Supervisor or delegate will conduct an enrolment process following the acceptance of an offer. An enrolment package will be given to the family including an enrolment form that includes regulatory authorisations. Either on return of the enrolment form or at Orientation families will receive a Preschool Information folder. The information in the enrolment package is retained by the family for future reference. In collaboration with families the most appropriate orientation for each child will be planned to provide for their best start at our centre.

#### **Enrolment Form**

The enrolment form must be completed by each enrolling family. 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 the following information for each child:

- ◁ 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, emergency evacuation location and/or excursion; any person authorised to give approval for an educator to take the child out of the service; any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or to authorise administration of medication to the child.
- ◁ Details of court orders, parenting orders or plans.
- ◁ Details of court orders relating to the child's residence or contact with a parent or other person.
- ◁ Gender of the child.
- ◁ 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.
- ◁ Authorisation for the service to take the child on regular outings.
- ◁ Authorisation for the children to be relocated in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- ◁ Name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service.
- ◁ Child's Medicare number (if available).
- ◁ Details of any specific healthcare needs of the child including any medical condition.
- ◁ Details of any allergies or anaphylaxis diagnosis.
- ◁ Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis/asthma/diabetic management or risk minimisation plan.
- ◁ Details of dietary restrictions for the child.
- ◁ Immunisation status of the child
- ◁ All information will be checked before enrolment is complete including the child's immunisation status.

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

### **Custody Arrangements**

The Education and Care Services National Law requires our service to have details of all custodial and access arrangements.

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

### **Orientation**

- ◁ Prior to the child's first day, Educators and staff will familiarise themselves with information about the child from their enrolment form. Any health and/or medical conditions will be investigated to ensure staff are able to manage them appropriately if required.
- ◁ The orientation and settling in period will consider and respect the needs of both families and children. On commencement of preschool 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.
- ◁ 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.

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

- ◁ Inviting 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.
- ◁ Providing all new families with a conducted tour of the premises which will include introductions to other educators, children and families, and that highlights specific policies and procedures that families need to know about our service.

- ◁ Ensuring each family has a copy of the Family Handbook and an opportunity to have any questions answered.
- ◁ 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 regard to enrolling their child at the service.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

**Approved Provider** will be responsible for:

- ◁ Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011 with regard to the delivery and collection of children at all times.
- ◁ Providing 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.
- ◁ Ensuring that enrolment forms comply with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162.
- ◁ Ensuring that enrolment records are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 183).
- ◁ Ensuring 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 permitting the parent's entry would pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educator under the Law, or if the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor reasonably believes that permitting the parent's entry would contravene a court order. (Regulation 157).

**Nominated Supervisor** will be responsible for:

- ◁ Providing enrolment application forms.
- ◁ Maintaining a waiting list.
- ◁ Maintain an immunisation register.
- ◁ Collecting, receipting and banking enrolment fees.
- ◁ Offering places in line with this policy and criteria for priority access, and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy.
- ◁ Providing a report to the approved provider regarding the status of enrolments.
- ◁ Storing completed enrolment application forms in a lockable file (refer to privacy and confidentiality policy) as soon as is practicable.

**Early Childhood Educators will be responsible for:**

- ◁ Acting in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy.
- ◁ Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required.
- ◁ Ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service.
- ◁ Ensuring 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 (Regulation 157).
- ◁ Developing strategies to assist new families to:
  - » feel welcomed into the service;
  - » become familiar with service policies and procedures;
  - » to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child.
- ◁ Providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members.
- ◁ Sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress with regard to settling in to the service.

**Families** will be responsible for:

- ◁ Reading and complying with this policy.
- ◁ Informing the preschool of changes to their enrolment form details.

### **Evaluation**

Successful orientation and enrolment procedures promote smooth transitions between home and our centre. Information sharing and the signing of authorisations ensures a safe and secure environment for the child.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or

procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

**Legislative Requirements:**

- < Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 167, 170, 176
- < Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 102, 102D, 160, 161, 162, 168(2)(k), 177, 183
- < Privacy Act 1988
- < Public Health Act 2010 No 127: Part 5 Division 4, Section 87
- < Health records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- < Family Assistance Law [www.dese.gov.au](http://www.dese.gov.au)

**Links to National Quality Standard:**

- < National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children - Standard 5.1, 5.2
- < National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities - Standard 6.1
- < National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership – Standard 7.1

**Sources:**

- < Priority of Access Guidelines for child care services  
[www.dese.gov.au/early-childhood-and-child-care-case-studies/resources/priority-access-guidelines-child-care-services](http://www.dese.gov.au/early-childhood-and-child-care-case-studies/resources/priority-access-guidelines-child-care-services)

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