

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 | | |
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| 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 | |
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| 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

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| Arrival and Departure Policy Administration of Medication Policy Anaphylaxis Management Policy Asthma Management Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Code of Conduct Policy | Enrolment Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Payment of Fees Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Sick Children Policy |
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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, management, 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. 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.

MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE:

- 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
- the child is allocated a focus educator
- 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)
- 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 fee and bond (if applicable)
- 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, communication with parents.
- 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)
- advised about the daily report/journal and how parents can view this
- introduced to the room routine and Service program. This includes portfolios (if applicable) 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.

ROOM TRANSITION- Moving up and moving on

When children transition to a new age group or room at the end of the year, 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/sessions 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).

SOURCE

Australia Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
 Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. (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>

REVIEW

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| POLICY REVIEWED BY | Cherie Graham | Childcare Director | 14/04/2022 |
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| POLICY REVIEWED | NOVEMBER 2021 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | NOVEMBER 2022 |
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| MODIFICATIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed- no major changes • sources checked for currency | | |
| POLICY REVIEWED | PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS | NEXT REVIEW DATE | |
| NOVEMBER 2020 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small edits within policy • additional information related to transitioning to a new room added • Orientation Survey added to policy as Appendix | NOVEMBER 2021 | |
| NOVEMBER 2019 | additional points added sources checked for currency and updated aligned to orientation checklist | NOVEMBER 2020 | |
| NOVEMBER 2018 | Rearranged the order of points for better flow Sources/references alphabetised. Points added to 'implementation' section. | NOVEMBER 2019 | |
| AUGUST 2017 | Minor changes made to the policy | NOVEMBER 2018 | |
| NOVEMBER 2016 | New Format created and policy created | NOVEMBER 2017 | |
| OCTOBER 2017 | Updated references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard | NOVEMBER 2018 | |

APPENDIX 1-

ORIENTATION SATISFACTION SURVEY FOR NEW PARENTS

At 'Name of Service' we are continually committed to improving the early childhood experience for you and your child/children. To do this properly, we need to know how you feel and then respond swiftly to your suggestions.

When convenient please complete the following survey. The information will be used to critique the Service's initial orientation process.

| A rating of '1' meaning, needs improvement and a rating of '5' meaning, outstanding | | | | | |
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| Relevance of information provided in the orientation package | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Relevance of information provided verbally | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Staff friendliness | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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| Staff punctuality | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
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Please answer Yes or No to the following:

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| Were you provided with sufficient information prior to orientation? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Did you receive a detailed tour of your child's room? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Did the Service/room feel welcoming? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Was there adequate time made for you and your child for orientation? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Were you introduced to your child's educators? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Were you introduced to all staff members? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Were you given an opportunity to ask questions? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Were your questions adequately answered? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Were you shown the location of the room's program & day journal | Yes | or | No | | |
| Were you given adequate suggestions on settling your child? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Did educators support you when leaving your child? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Were you shown the signing in and out requirements? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Were you provided with a Family Handbook? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Did you find the information in the handbook useful? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Were you provided with information about Child Care Subsidy? | Yes | or | No | | |
| Did you feel safe when visiting our Service (sign in/out, WHS, COVID safe practices) | Yes | or | No | | |
| Overall rating of the orientation and transition experience: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please identify 3 areas that could be improved:

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Please identify 3 areas that met your needs:

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Thank you for your assistance

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

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| 6.1 | Supportive relationships with families | Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role. |
| 6.1.2 | Parent views are respected | Families have opportunities to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions |