

WRITING, REVIEWING & MAINTAINING POLICIES POLICY

Under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place under regulation 168 and 169. While it is important to have policies and procedures in an early childhood education and care service, it is equally important that the policies are regularly reviewed, and amendments made to cater for changes in legislation and researched best practice, and changes to service procedures that aim to support ongoing quality improvement.

Engagement in regular review of policies and procedures ensure that they align with quality practice within the Service and are responsive to feedback identified through the service's risk management and quality improvement systems. [Guide to National Quality Framework, 2017 (amended 2020)]

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

| QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES | | |
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| 6.1.1 | Engagement with the service | Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions |

| QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| 7.1 | Governance | Governance supports the operation of a quality service. |
| 7.1.1 | Service philosophy and purposes | A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations. |
| 7.1.2 | Management Systems | Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service. |
| 7.1.3 | Roles and Responsibilities | Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood and support effective decision making and operation of the service. |
| 7.2.1 | Continuous improvement | There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place. |

| EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS | |
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| 31 | Conditions on service approval-quality improvement plan |

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| 55-56 | Quality Improvement Plan |
| 168 | Education and care services must have policies and procedures |
| 170 | Policies and procedures to be followed |
| 171 | Policies and procedures to be kept available |
| 172 | Notification of change to policies or procedures |

PURPOSE

To ensure compliance with the National Quality Framework, our Service will review our policies and procedures on an annual basis, or more frequently if required due to changes having occurred within the Service, or if considered best practice in respect of current research. We aim to work in collaboration with our educators and families, gathering feedback when updating our policies and procedures to ensure that the needs of children being educated and cared for are always being met.

SCOPE

This policy applies to staff, management and families of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Policies and procedures are an integral part of the documentation required to meet legislative requirements for all early childhood education and care services. Policies and procedures clearly outline the processes all staff employed by a service will follow and assist all staff to understand their roles and responsibilities. They ensure a consistent approach and embedded practice across all operations and practices of a service and help to inform families how the service operates.

MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE:

- our policies and procedures are underpinned by the *Early Years Learning Framework* and ECA Code of Ethics and address the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations*, National Quality Standard, and other state/territory laws as applicable
- all policies and procedures will be made available for families and educators to view at all times
- all policies developed will be made in consultation with management, staff and families of children attending the Service
- that all policies and procedures are reviewed as per the document review routine, or more often if required (e.g., due to changes in regulations, legislation, and/or Service practices). This gives both families and educators opportunities to suggest aspects or areas that may need to be modified or improved.

- each document has a recommended review date stated in the 'Review' section of the policy document and changes are clearly made through version control
- educators, staff, and family members are invited to have input into the policies and procedures at any time of the year, not only at the scheduled review time for a particular policy
- policies include clear, simple statements and are presented in a logical format
- procedures include detailed descriptions of how each policy will be implemented within the service and provide step-by-step instructions to ensure each staff member or any other person can follow in a particular circumstance
- all policies will be signed, sourced/referenced, and dated at each review and educators and other staff will continuously seek out relevant new information and research to be included in policies in order to provide the best possible environment and practices
- policies will be informed by relevant authorities to ensure best practice- e.g.: KidSafe, Cancer Council, Red Nose
- all stakeholders at the Service must be informed of any changes to policies. This will occur in writing and be provided to families, educators, other staff, management, the committee, and any other applicable individuals
- families will be invited to join our Family Committee
- families not involved in the Family Committee will have the opportunity to revise and help plan policies via Newsletters and specific letters to families discussing the policy or a draft of the proposed policy and given the opportunity to respond
- all policies that are being either reviewed or developed will be displayed on the Service's noticeboard, so that all stakeholders are aware of progress at all times and can be involved in the review
- all revised/updated policies are included in the Policy Folder/document. Updates will be made to the Family Handbook, Staff Handbook and other related documents.
- policies are accessible to all families and provide a translation service for policies for families who do not have English as their first language.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Services must have policies and procedures in place relating to the categories listed in Regulation 168 of the *National Regulations*. Services may have additional policies and procedures dependent upon their unique situation and operation requirements.

In accordance with Regulation 172, our Service must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have a significant impact on:

- the service's provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; or
- the family's ability to utilise the service.

The service must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

If the service considers that the notice period would pose a risk to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child enrolled at the service, the approved provider must ensure that parents of children enrolled at the service are notified as soon as practicable after making a change.

The service must ensure that copies of the current policies and procedures are available for inspection at the service upon request.

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP RESOURCES

- Policy Evaluation Procedure
- Policy Evaluation Worksheet
- Notification of change to policy and procedures form

SOURCE

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2012). *How to Develop and Update Policies Successfully (without the stress)*.

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011).

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

Kearns, K. (2017). *The Business of Childcare* (4th Ed.).

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

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| POLICY REVIEWED BY: | Cherie Graham | Childcare Director | 14/04/2022 |
| POLICY REVIEWED | AUGUST 2021 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | DECEMBER 2022 |
| MODIFICATIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small edits to policy reflected in development of Policy Evaluation Procedure (new) • additional Quality Area added (QA6) | | |

| POLICY REVIEWED | PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS | NEXT REVIEW DATE |
|-----------------|---|------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional source added | |
| DECEMBER 2020 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional information added to implementation and responsibilities of management • small edits throughout policy • page numbers added | DECEMBER 2021 |
| JANUARY 2019 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory statement added. • Sources/references corrected, updated, and alphabetised. • Minor formatting (line spacing & paragraph spacing) for consistency throughout policy. | DECEMBER 2020 |
| OCTOBER 2018 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory statement added. • Sources/references corrected, updated, and alphabetised. • Minor formatting (line spacing & paragraph spacing) for consistency throughout policy. | OCTOBER 2019 |
| OCTOBER 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed and created new policy and format. Updated references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard | OCTOBER 2018 |