

# Orientation and Enrolment

**National Regulations:** Regulation 168

**National Quality Framework:** Standard 6.1.1

**Privacy Act 1988**

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## Policy Statement

Enrolment is a vitally important step in providing and receiving information about children and the service and communicating expectations for each. Parents want to be reassured that their child will be safe, happy and well cared for and they will want to know that those entrusted with the care of their child is capable, knowledgeable, caring, trustworthy, honest and reliable.

From the services perspective this is the opportunity to proudly illustrate the value of early childhood and provide families with a range of information about what their child will be experiencing during their day in the setting.

## Goals / What are we going to do?

- All families will receive a full service tour, introductions with educators and have highlighted specific policies and procedures in the parent handbook.
- Collect and store completed enrolment forms before an enrolment commences.
- A signed orientation form must also be completed and filed.
- Encourage families to have some play dates at the service, where the parent stays and allows for the establishment of relationships with educators.
- Encourage families to share information about their child's health and wellbeing.

## Strategies / How will we do this?

### Enrolling Families and Children into the Service

During the enrolment process the service and families will work through a checklist of information to assist with their understanding of using the service. The Director will discuss the following;

- Parent Handbook
- Orientation Checklist
- Enrolment form and profile sheet
- Custody Arrangements
- Educational programs
- Fee structure and payment systems
- Bond payment
- Educator qualifications and introduction.
- Management structure
- What to bring
- Human Services Information
  
- Immunisation
- Medication policy
- Drop off and pick up policy
- Priority of access policy
- Contacts
- Absence from the service
- Bus permission if necessary
- Sun smart Policy

Prior to or on the first day of enrolment, information will be required to be provided by the parent/legal guardian that includes:

- Enrolment Form
- Immunisation record
- My Routine Information
- Child Profile / background information
- Orientation Checklist and Complying Written Agreement

The service may at this point determine if additional support will be required for the family. Links can be made with external support agencies for;

- Children with additional needs
- Families who have English as a second language
- Families with low literacy levels
- Children with health needs such as Asthma / Anaphylaxis

All families need to take responsibility for arranging their own CCS for the Centre. The Centre unfortunately cannot register families for CCS; however, will assist with directing families to the correct organisations.

At the beginning of each year all families will re-enrol to ensure that all children and family information is up to date. A Change of Details Form is available anytime from the office and parents can update their information. Changes in a child's ongoing permanent booking will require the families complete a new Complying Written Agreement.

### **Settling Children**

The service understands that settling into childcare can be an emotional time for both children and their parents. It may be the child's first experience or your child may be transitioning to a new room in the centre. Children often have difficulty separating from their families and each child's reactions and length of time they take to settle into their environment depends on each child, their previous experiences and their age.

What we know can help;

- Spending time at the centre with their child before and as they settle into care. Families are welcome to visit the service by making prior arrangements with the Director.
- Show confidence about your decision for the child to attend the service. Displaying trust with the service will send the message of reassurance and that it is a wonderful place to be.
- Ensure you have informed educators about your child's likes, dislikes, routines and individual preferences for food and drink.
- Seek out a preferred educator that your child can be left with when you drop them off for the day.
- Allow time for drop off –often children do not cope when it is rushed.
- Contact the service during your child's first days to check how your child is settling.

The service can help by

- Ensuring that each family has participated in the enrolment and orientation process.
- Allowing the orientation process to be flexible to meet the needs of all families.
- Ensuring that there are effective procedures for moving to a new room.
- Rostering educators allowing for consistency for new children and families.

Educators will help by;

- Being aware of new enrolments, their commencement day, their background information their interests and needs.
- Encourage a separation routine, does the child need to wave at the window, the gate or do they need to become involved in a favourite activity.
- Encourage the parent to let you know approximately what time they will collect their child as this will allow educators to honestly tell a child whether it will be soon or later.
- Immediately let children know where they can toilet, keep their bag or lunch box. Discuss with the child how they will receive their meals. All children need to know their basic needs will be met. (Maslow)
- Buddy new children with long term children. This will ensure that children feel welcome and accepted.
- Make the day fun filled and wonderful, so children leave and *want* to come back!!
- Children will often feel that their family is not ever going to return. A picture book made of photos of the centre routine can be compiled and discussed. This will reassure the child that at a specific time their parents will come back.
- A photo of the child's parents laminated may also comfort a child.
- Encourage the family to ring and check on their child's progress and provide honest feedback.

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

### Children

Children are important in the enrolment and orientation process. They should be allowed to explore their environment, meet their educators and be shown where their personal belongings are to be kept while at the centre. Children should be asked what they would like to do when they come so planning can begin.

### Families

Orientation is the most valuable way of sharing information about care routines that best suit the child and it allows parents to observe the program and educator interactions. Reviewing how we orientate families is also an important way of improving customer service and the quality of the service provided. Parents may often be asked to complete a questionnaire about how they felt upon entering the service and the enrolment process.

Whilst on orientation families must take an observatory role only. Families must not discipline other children within the service. Families must also be mindful that your presence may be upsetting for other children, sometimes the more adults in the room the busier it becomes. The service director or room leader will discuss with you if this becomes problematic. The service expects that orientation visits would occur over a week or two -long drawn out orientation visits become detrimental to achieving smooth transitions into care.

Leaving children for short periods at the service e.g. until lunch time, for the first couple of weeks is one of the best ways of settling children into care. Note: All children will be different and it may be different for your child.

### Educators

Educators will also have valuable ideas about the enrolment and orientation process and how children are transitioned into their group. Their feedback will be gathered through their appraisal process.

### Management

Orientation will be reviewed by the Management on an annual basis. New parents will be sent a link to a short online questionnaire which feeds straight back to management. Families will be consulted on how the service met their needs and the satisfaction of their early childhood experience. This will then be used to generate professional discussions with the service and improve the overall quality of care.

### Community

It is important to remember that our service is part of a wider community and the first impressions left on families and children will be discussed with their family and friends. The service reputation for the quality of care received rests on those that families encounter first - so ensure this valuable time counts for how you would like the community to perceive the service.

## Sources and Further Readings

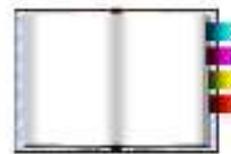
ACECQA Starting Blocks- *Pre-paring for child care* : [www.startingblocks.gov.au](http://www.startingblocks.gov.au)

[www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Year Learning Framework for Australia.*

Australian Government Department of Education and Training: *Child Care Provider Handbook* (2018) Version 1 [www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook-0](http://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook-0)

Jorde Bloom P. (2005), *Blueprint for action: Achieving centre-based change through staff development* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). New Horizons, Illinois. USA. Management has a copy.

Kearns.K. (2007). *The Business of Child Care*. NSW. Pearson Education Management has a copy.



Policy review date	Changes	Next Review date
14 <sup>th</sup> March 2017		Jan 2019
4 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	NQF Changes	October 2019
17 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2018	Changes to CCB - CCS	December 2021