

# Enrolment and Orientation

## **Education and Care Services National Law**

175 – Offence relating to the requirement to keep enrolment and other documents

## **Education and Care Services National Regulations**

85 – Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures

86 – Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness

88 – Infectious diseases

90 – Medical condition policy

91 – Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents

92 – Medication record

99 – Children leaving the education and care service premises

102 – Authorisations for excursions

102d – Authorisations for service to transport children

157 Access for parents

160- Child enrolment records are kept by the approved provider

161- Authorisations to be held in enrolment record

162- Health information to be held in the enrolment record

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 and procedures

177- Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by the approved provider

181 – Confidentiality of records kept by the approved provider

183- Storage of records and other documents

## **National Quality Framework:**

6.1.1 – Engagement with the service

## **Privacy Act 1988**

### **Policy Link:**

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations

Administration of Medication

Complaints and Grievances

Delivery and Collection of Children

Emergency and Evacuation

Fees

Governance and Leadership

Infectious Diseases

Interactions with Children

Medical Conditions

Records and Record Keeping

Regular Transportation

Sleep and Rest

Sun Protection

Child Protection and Safety

Connection with Culture

Diversity and Equity

Health and Safety

Internet and Social Networking Usage

Privacy and Confidentiality

Code of Conduct

Directors Manual

## Definitions

Term	Meaning	Source
ACECQA- Australian Children's Education and	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including providing guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.	<a href="http://acecqa.gov.au">acecqa.gov.au</a>
Enrolment	An enrolment occurs when the provider has an arrangement with an individual or organisation to provide education and care to a child.	<a href="#">Childcare provider handbook</a>
Enrolment record	<p>The approved provider must ensure that an enrolment record is kept for each child enrolled at the service, and the family day care (FDC) educator must keep an enrolment record for each child they educate and care for.</p> <p>The record must include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full name, date of birth and address of the child.</li> <li>• The name, address and contact details of</li> <li>• each known parent of the child</li> <li>• any emergency contact,</li> <li>• any authorised nominee</li> <li>• any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or administration of medication</li> <li>• any person authorised to give permission to the educator to take the child off the premises</li> <li>• any person authorised to authorise the education and care service to transport the child or arrange transportation of the child.</li> <li>• Details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plan.</li> <li>• Gender of the child.</li> <li>• Language used in the child's home.</li> <li>• Cultural background of the child and their parents.</li> <li>• Any special considerations for the child, such as cultural, dietary or religious requirements or additional needs.</li> </ul> <p>Authorisations for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the approved provider, nominated supervisor or educator to seek medical treatment and ambulance transportation for the child</li> <li>• the service to take the child on regular outings</li> <li>• regular transportation of the child.</li> <li>• Name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service.</li> <li>• Medicare number (if available).</li> <li>• Details of any specific healthcare needs of the child, including any medical conditions, allergies, or diagnosis that the child is at risk of anaphylaxis.</li> <li>• Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis medical management plan or risk minimisation plan.</li> <li>• Any dietary restrictions.</li> <li>• Immunisation status.</li> <li>• If the approved provider or a staff member has sighted a child health record, a notation to that effect</li> </ul>	National regulation 102, <a href="#">160-162</a>
Orientation	The process to support the child's transition to the service, whereby families spend time at the service with the child a few times before leaving the child on their own. The time required for orientation and settling in will vary for each child and their family.	<a href="#">ACECQA -enrolment and orientation information sheet</a>

## Policy Statement

Enrolment is a vital 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 are capable, knowledgeable, caring, trustworthy, honest, and reliable.

From the service 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 and introductions with educators and have highlighted specific policies and procedures in the parent handbook.
- Collect, store, scan, and upload completed enrolment records before 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 well-being.

## Procedures / 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 Record and profile sheet
- Custody Arrangements
- Educational programs
- Fee structure and payment systems
- Bond payment
- Educator qualifications and introduction.
- Management structure
- What to bring
- Services Australia Information
- Immunisation
- Medication policy
- Drop off and pick up policy
- Priority of access policy
- Contacts
- Absence from the service
- Bus permission, if necessary

- Sun Protection 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 Record
- 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 must be responsible for arranging their own Child Care Subsidy (CCS) for the Centre. The Centre, unfortunately, cannot register families for CCS; however, it 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 to complete a new Complying Written Agreement.

### Settling Children

The service understands that settling into childcare can be an emotional time for 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. Each child's reactions and the time they take to settle into their environment depend on each child, their previous experiences, and their age. Children often have difficulty separating from their families.

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 in the service will send the message of reassurance that it is a fun, safe place.
- Ensure you have informed educators about your child's likes, dislikes, routines and individual preferences for food and drink.
- Seek out a preferred educator 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 allows for consistency for new children and families.

Educators will help by;

- Being aware of new enrolments, their commencement day, background information, interests and needs.
- Encourage a separation routine. Does the child need to wave at the window or the gate, or do they need to become involved in a favourite activity?
- Encourage the parent to let you know what time they will collect their child, as this will allow educators to honestly tell a child whether it will be sooner or later.
- Immediately let children know where to toilet and keep their bag or lunch box. Discuss with the child how they will receive their meals. All children need to know that 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 return.
- Children will often feel that their family will never return. A picture book of photos of the centre routine can be compiled and discussed. This will reassure the child that their parents will return at a specific time.
- A laminated photo of the child’s parents may also comfort a child.

- Encourage the family to ring, check their child’s progress, and provide honest feedback.

## Links to Theory

Much research has been completed about childhood anxiety and the importance of forming secure attachments in early childhood settings.

A 2015 survey of the mental health of Australian children and adolescents called ‘Young Minds Matter identified that 40.5% of emotional or behavioural problems among children and young people aged 4 to 17 years were first identified by a school staff member. Research shows that effective approaches to promote mental health and well-being and prevent mental health problems should be prioritised, given the scale of human suffering and health, as social and economic consequences of poor mental health.

The Australian Government’s BeYou organisation sees-

“Partnering with families as a key factor in supporting positive mental health outcomes.

Families are the first educational setting for children and significantly influence children’s mental health and well-being. As children move through their life span, –educational settings – early learning, and primary and secondary schools – also become critical influences for children and youth.

Building partnerships between educators and families support communication and response consistency and can assist in helping children and young people’s mental well-being. Family–education partnerships have been found to have personal, social, and academic benefits for students, families, and educational settings, through enhanced staff retention.”

Psychologist Karen Young advocates that when children are anxious, they see a threat, and it is our job to bring them back to safety.

Children need an attachment BATON that is passed from one trusted adult to another. In thinking about a voice for a child with anxiety a low and monotone voice will register as a there at use your sing-song voice! Use the same trusted adult and the same routine.

Encourage breathing. Karen states that breathing is the best way to calm the brain!

Validate, “I can see this is big for you, and you’re going to miss your mum” avoid saying, “you’re ok,” this tells the child I don’t get you causing more significant anxiety.

Vagus Nerve- The longest nerve in your body! Jordan Fallis writes, “The vagus nerve is a key part of your parasympathetic “rest and digest” nervous system. It influences your breathing, digestive function and heart rate, all of which greatly impact your mental health” Research shows that rubbing in the middle of the back/neck can stimulate the vagus nerve and reduce stress. Humming also stimulates the vagus nerve.



### Culturally Valued Perspectives

When Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enter Early Childhood Services it is usually in a contemporary Western way. We draw on socio-cultural theories, learning socially and expanding on what children currently understand.

Being, Belonging and Becoming challenges us as educators to question our practices and develop a diverse way of experiencing the concepts of Being, Belonging and Becoming across cultures.

[Foundations for Success](#) (2013) introduces the concept of “learning bridges.”

“A learning bridge is a means of being valued, respected and in safe relationships for learning and living.”

Adding further successful learning bridges are built when we-

- Nurture strong respectful family and community partnerships and engagement.
- Critically reflect their own values, views and understanding of childhood, children, and learning.
- Value and utilise the culturally valued knowledge about children’s learning and development held within the community.
- Demonstrate an ongoing commitment to developing their own as well as children’s cultural competence.
- Build our own awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, history, and contemporary societies.

### National Quality Framework – Staffing arrangements

4.1. Staffing arrangements enhance children’s learning and development.

### National Quality Framework – Governance and leadership

7.1.2. Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

### Belong, Being and Becoming – Children have a strong sense of identity

1.1. Children feel safe, secure and supported.

### Reflective questions about this policy.

In what ways will I build bridges with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families?

How do we settle children into our service?

Do educators understand their role and how to assist a child with separation anxiety?

What other strategies could we implement?

In what ways do we build on our learning of other cultures?

### When answering the reflective questions, did you have areas identified for improvement:

If change is required:

- Discuss any proposed ideas or changes to the orientation and enrolment processes.
- Have any situations arise that we could improve during orientation?
- What procedures could we improve?

To implement the changes effectively:

- Trial the changes

A review of change is an important step:

- Evaluate whether the changes have improved the orientation process.

Document in your Quality Improvement Plan.

### Roles and Responsibilities in Orientation and Enrolment.

#### Approved Provider, Area Manager and Director

#### Responsible Person

- Provide opportunities for families to attend the centre during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service before commencing.
- Ensure all enrolment forms are completed and comply with regulations 160, 161, and 162.

- Ensure that enrolment records are stored safely and securely. They are held for three years after the child's last day of care.
- Maintain a waiting list.
- Review the orientation policy every 2 yrs.
- Families will be consulted on how the service met their needs and the satisfaction of their early childhood experience.

#### **Educators**

- Show children where their bags will go, how they will get their lunch, and where the toilets are!
- Ensure you contribute ideas about the enrolment and orientation process and how children are transitioned into their group.
- Educator feedback will be gathered through their appraisal process.
- Ensure that the enrolment records you receive are completed in their entirety.
- Ensure new families feel welcome at the service.
- Ensure separation routines are established.
- Share information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress settling into the service.

#### **Families**

- Spend time completing the orientation process for your child.
- Be confident during drop-off. You could say- "Here is Miss Bec; she is going to take you, and then you're going to play playdough, and I will hear about it this afternoon".
- Consider short periods at the service, e.g. until lunchtime, for the first couple weeks. Note: All children will be different and may be different for your child.

#### **Community**

- It is essential 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 families and friends.
- The service reputation for the quality of care received rests on those that families encounter first - so ensure this valuable time count for how you would like the community to perceive the service.

#### **Sources and Further Reading**

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

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

Queensland Government (2013) *Foundations for Success: Guidelines for extending and enriching learning for*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the kindergarten year. QLD

[www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au) *Belonging, Being and Becoming V2.0: The Early Year Learning Framework for Australia. 2022*

Australian Government Department of Education and Training: *Child Care Provider Handbook* (2018)  
<https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-package/child-care-provider-handbook>