

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 kept in the enrolment record

162- Health information to be kept 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

Definitions

Term	Meaning	Source
ACECQA-	The independent national authority works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector in improving outcomes for children.	acecqa.gov.au
Enrolment	An enrolment occurs when the provider has an arrangement with an individual or organisation to provide education and care to a child.	Child care Provider Handbook
Enrolment record	The approved provider must keep an enrolment record 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. The record must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full name, date of birth and address of the child. • The name, address and contact details of • each known parent of the child • any emergency contact, • any authorised nominee • any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or administration of medication • any person authorised to give permission to the Educator to take the child off the premises • any person authorised to authorise the education and care service to transport the child or arrange transportation of the child. • Details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plan. • Gender of the child. 	National regulation 102, 160-162

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language used in the child’s home. • Cultural background of the child and their parents. • Any special considerations for the child, such as cultural, dietary or religious requirements or additional needs. <p>Authorisations for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the approved provider, Nominated Supervisor or an Educator to seek medical treatment and/or ambulance transportation for the child • the service to take the child on regular outings • regular transportation of the child. • Name, address and telephone number of the child’s registered medical practitioner or medical service. • Medicare number (if available). • Details of any specific healthcare needs of the child, including any medical conditions, allergies, or diagnosis that the child is at risk of anaphylaxis. • Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis medical management plan or risk minimisation plan. • Any dietary restrictions. • Immunisation status. • If the approved provider or a staff member has sighted a child health record, a notation to that effect 	
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.	<u>ACECQA -enrolment and orientation information sheet</u>

Links to other Policies

- 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

Induction and ongoing training

Educators with the service will be trained on this policy during;

- Orientation and Induction procedures, thus allowing Educators to ask questions and discuss.

- Induction may be staggered to allow the Educator enough time to absorb the information provided.
- Training will occur in various formats, including face-to-face training, discussions at staff meetings, video demonstrations, vignettes, guest speakers, and open-ended policy questionnaires.
- Inductions and training records will be completed and kept in each team member's file.
- Educators will be provided with ongoing support as required, based on the extent to which they have demonstrated competence in carrying out their responsibilities to policy and procedures.

Policy Statement

Enrolment is vital 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 their child's care are capable, knowledgeable, caring, trustworthy, honest, and reliable.

From the service perspective, this is an opportunity to proudly illustrate the value of early childhood and provide families with a range of information about what their child will experience 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 them in understanding how to use 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

At this point, the service may 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 arrange their Child Care Subsidy (CCS) before commencing at the centre. Unfortunately, the centre cannot hold a vacancy within a room while the parent waits for the childcare subsidy to be approved.

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 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 it takes to settle into their environment depend on their previous experiences and 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 reassure 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 when they will collect their child. This will allow Educators to honestly tell a child whether it will be sooner or later.
- Immediately let children know where to go to the toilet and keep their bags. 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 their mental health and well-being. As children progress, 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.

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.



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 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.

Funds of Knowledge (Luis Moll)

Early Year Learning Framework- cited 11 times Definition p.66

It is an educational concept that acknowledges the valuable knowledge, skills, and cultural practices children bring from their families and communities. By recognising and incorporating these funds into early childhood education, Educators can create a more inclusive, culturally responsive, and engaging learning environment.

Examples:

- Parent nights add a cultural celebration.
- Parent strengths/talents are asked to be shared with children.
- Learn a song in a child's first language.
- Ask a gardener to help garden with the children.
- Ask for traditional recipes from a family and cook.

Reflective questions about this policy.

How do we build a safe cultural setting where those from other cultures feel safe?

- Flags on display.
- Introductions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may first be around where you are from before discussing business.

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 presented 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 your thoughts on your Critical Reflection Tracker or in your room diary, and let your manager know at your next Educator meeting. Alternatively, write them down and pass them on to your Educational Leader or director.

Document in your Quality Improvement Plan.

Roles and Responsibilities

Approved Provider, Area Managers, Director and Nominated Supervisor

- 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 counts for how you would like the community to perceive the service.

Sources and Further Reading

ACECQA Starting Blocks- *Pre-paring for child care*:
www.startingblocks.gov.au

Jorde Bloom P. (2005), *Blueprint for action: Achieving centre-based change through staff development* (2nd 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 *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>

Policy Update

This policy will be updated in December 2027 or if a policy review has been conducted and significant changes have been made. It will be reprinted and distributed to Educators and families.