



ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and community

POLICY STATEMENT

Our service will implement a process to ensure enrolment and orientation processes are planned and implemented to meet the needs of the child and family as well as ensuring all legislative requirements, including the Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines are adhered to.

We will ensure:

- Children are provided with support and comfort to settle into the service and establish new friendships and relationships;
- A thoughtful process is planned in consultation with families, to assist in separating from their child;
- Educators are provided with a clearly explained enrolment process; time to get to know families before children start; strategies to support families in introducing children to our service, time to develop close professional relationships with families; support from referral agencies; and information about custodial issues
- Home language, cultural background and family priorities are considered at all times during the process.

GOALS/ WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

Enrolment and orientation procedures form the foundation for strong relationships between families and early education and care settings and promote a quality experience of education and care for children.

Good procedures include consistent information around service operation and authorisations, promoting compliance and a safe and secure environment for children and families.

STRATEGIES / HOW WILL IT BE DONE?

Enrolment

Enrolments will be accepted according to the Australian Government 'Priority of Access'. Parents/guardians will be advised that families of children enrolled with lower priority of access may be required to alter their days or leave the service in order to provide a place for a higher priority child.

Enrolment Form

The enrolment form must be completed by each enrolling family. At enrolment, parents are encouraged to provide any further information about their child that will support continuity of care between home and the service.

Please note that when an enrolling families are not fluent in English the enrolment meeting will, wherever possible be conducted with a translator for support and understanding.

The enrolment record will include the following information for each child:

- Full name, date of birth and address of the child.
- Name, address and contact details of each parent of the child; any emergency contacts; any person nominated by the parent to collect the child from the service; any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or to authorise administration of medication





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to the child; any person authorised to give approval for an educator to take the child out of the service.

- Details of court orders, parenting orders or plans.
- Details of court orders relating to the child's residence or contact with a parent or other person.
- Gender of the child.
- Language used in the child's home.
- Cultural background of the child and child's parents.
- Any special considerations for the child (e.g. cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional need).
- Authorisations for our service to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service, and transportation of the child by an ambulance service.
- Authorisation for the service to take the child on regular outings.
- Authorisation for the children to be relocated in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- Name, address and telephone
- Child's Medicare number (if available).
- Details of any specific healthcare needs of the child including any medical condition.
- Support plans, NDIS plan or diagnosis
- Details of any allergies or anaphylaxis diagnosis.
- Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis/asthma/diabetic management or risk minimisation plan.
- Details of dietary restrictions for the child.
- Immunisation status of the child
- All information will be checked before enrolment is complete including the child's immunisation status.

A Privacy Statement attached to the enrolment form which details:

- the name and contact details of the service;
- the fact that enrolling parents/guardians are able to gain access to their information;
- why the information is collected;
- the organisations to which the information may be disclosed;
- any law that requires the particular information to be collected;
- the main consequences for not providing the required information.

Enrolment forms will be updated annually or when a family's circumstances change, to ensure information is current and correct.

Custody Arrangements

- The Education and Care Services National Regulations requires our service to have details of all custodial and access arrangements.
- Enrolling family members are responsible for informing the Nominated Supervisor of custody and access arrangements on enrolment, and must advise the Nominated Supervisor immediately of any subsequent alterations to these arrangements.
- All relevant legal documentation is to be shown to the Nominated Supervisor and a copy will be maintained in the child's enrolment record.





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Orientation

The orientation and settling in period will consider and respect the needs of both families and children. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to remain with their child when delivering or collecting them for as long a period as the parent/guardian and/or educators feel may be necessary to ensure the child's wellbeing.

We will always consider the feelings and time constraints that families may have in regard to participating in orientation processes and aim to make the experience a positive and welcoming introduction to the service.

Parents are required to participate in our orientation process with up to 2 visits to the service prior to starting care. Parents individual work situations will be taking into consideration by the Centre Director.

Our service will provide options for orientation to the education and care service for families which includes:

- Inviting new families to visit the service with their child at times that suit them, to familiarise families with the service prior to the child's attendance.
- Providing all new families and the child enrolling with a tour of the premises which will include introductions to other educators and children, and highlight specific policies and procedures that families need to know about our service.
- Families will be given a copy of the Enrolment Policy, Medication policy, Accident and Injury Policy, Child Behaviour Guidance Policy, Ethical Conduct for families, , Inclusive Practices, Fee Policy and Termination Policy.
- Ensuring each family has a copy of the Family Handbook and an opportunity to have any questions answered.
- The opportunity to stay with their child during the settling in process.
- Ensuring all new families are encouraged to share information about their child and any concerns, doubts or anxieties they may have in regard to enrolling their child at the service.

Enrolment Process

- Where possible offers are sent to parents approximately 4 weeks prior to a start date.
- Families who wish to reserve a start date and particular days in advance of 4 weeks will be put on the Services waiting list. We do not reserve places in advance of 4 weeks.
- Once parents decide to enrol their child, they must complete an enrolment form and attend an enrolment meeting with their child and the Director and or room leader prior to their child commencing.
- A bond consisting of 1 week full fee is to be paid to hold a child's position at the Service.
- The bond payment will be refunded within 6-8 weeks from the last day of attendance to families if all accounts are paid in full and no amount is outstanding when the child leaves the Service.
- Should your weekly bookings increase at any time you will be required to pay the difference into your bond.
- Children will transition from one room to another at the beginning of every year or if a child is developmentally and socially / emotionally ready. In this situation, there is no guarantee on the day available until a child vacates that day and taking into account your position on our waiting list.





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- We do not “hold” days for parents as this affects other family’s potential needs for bookings.
- Families who take up the offer to enrol must ensure they have read and understood all policies and procedures of the centre including: Child Behaviour Guidance Policy, Ethical Conduct for families, Incidents, injury, trauma and illness, Medication Policy, Inclusive Practices, Fee Policy and Termination Policy. Any Non-compliance with centre policies may result in having your child’s position withdrawn.

Withdrawal of care

- Families are advised upon enrolment of the withdrawal of enrolment conditions. Policies are updated annually, and parents are notified through centre newsletters of any changes.
- Families are required to provide the following written notice of termination of enrolment.

1 February to 31 October	4 weeks notice required
1 November to 31 January	8 weeks notice required

- If less than the written notice period is given prior to the agreed commencement date, one weeks full payment of fees and the one weeks bond is payable to the Service and is non-refundable.
- If a family has accepted the offer of a placement, then decides to withdraw from the Service before the agreed commencement date, the written notice period applies.
- The bond payment will be refunded within 4 week from the last day of attendance to families if all accounts are paid in full and no amount is outstanding when the child leaves the Service.
- Any other refunds or account credits will be refunded to the family by request and paid within 4 weeks of the request. This is to allow for any CCS reconciliation on the account.

One Day Enrolments

- In the best interest of the child and advocating for meaningful relationships Orchard Early Learning Centre does not offer one day a week enrolment.
- The only exception to this is where a one day enrolment will gradually increasing the number of days over a 4 week period. If there is no increase in days the child’ place will be terminated and the position offered to the next family on the waiting list. *On this occasion a one day placement is only offered on a Monday or Friday.

Two Day Enrolments

- Parents who enrol for a two day placement must include either a Monday or Friday to their booking. It is recommended that your chosen days are consecutive days as this helps children settle and form bonds with peers and educators. (EG Monday and Tuesday or Thursday and Friday)

Continuing enrolments for the new year

- Prior to the end of each year, families will be provided with a re enrolment letter to





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confirm their child's continuing enrolment for the New Year.

- Failure to return this re enrolment letter may result in their child not being considered for a future position.
- Families with children going to school the following year will be required to complete an end of enrolment form confirming that their child will be going to school the following year, adding an end date to their child's care.
- Families who require care in the New Year until the school year starts, will need to advise our enrolments consultant in writing on the end of enrolment form, stating their child's last date of attendance at Orchard Early Learning Centre. Any extensions to the advised date will be subject to availability.
- The Complying Written Arrangement will be updated
- Families eligible for Child Care Subsidy are responsible for ensuring that all information requested by Centrelink is provided to them in order to ensure no interruption to CCS payments.

Booking Casual Days at the Service

Parents can book additional days of attendance on a casual basis with an additional cost of \$10 per session booked. This fee is on top of the daily fee rate.

Parents can book casual day through:

1. Our Orchard Parent app.
Please refer to OWNA guide (Parent's Guide to the OWNA App & Portal)
2. Contact in person, via email or phone call to the Service Support and Enrolments Team at the Service.
Please note, Parents must receive confirmation from the Service prior to attending any additional days.

Employees with children at the Service

- Employees are welcome to enrol their child at the Service, however, if an employee is terminated from their position, the Service reserves the right to terminate the child's position due to conflict of interest.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011 with regard to the delivery and collection of children at all times.
- Providing opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and staff) for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program.





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- Ensuring that enrolment forms comply with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162.
- Ensuring that enrolment records are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 183).
- Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where permitting the parent's entry would pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educator under the Law, or if the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor reasonably believes that permitting the parent's entry would contravene a court order. (Regulation 157).
- Ensure that parents have access to current policies via our parent portal on our website and hard copies are available within the service.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Informing the Onboarding and enrolments team of enrolment priorities or special circumstances.
- Informing the Onboarding and enrolments team of Orchard ELC staff child care fee discount.
- Working with the enrolment team to transition children and prepare new year rolls.
- Maintain an immunisation register.
- Ensure positions offered are in line with this policy and criteria for priority access and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy.
- Ensure families understand the terms of enrolment.
- Providing a monthly report to the approved provider regarding the status of enrolments.
- Storing completed paper copy enrolment forms in a lockable file (refer to privacy and confidentiality policy) as soon as is practicable.
- Ensure that new children starting have a locker and a locker tag prepared and set up on the Parent App.
- Ensure that parents and the child are given a tour of the centre and the classroom prior to starting.
- Ensure that the lead educator is prepared and ready to welcome the new family on their first day.
- Ensure all staff in the new child's classroom are aware of the commencement date.
- Ensure that the medical and allergies forms for children have been collected and sighted and distributed to the appropriate parties.
- Ensure that information has been collected, sighted and distributed to appropriate parties if a child is coming in to care and receiving ACCS.
- Ensure that information has been collected, sighted and distributed to the appropriate parties if a child is under a court order or AVO.

Educators are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy.
- Responding to enrolment enquiries by referring parents to the our enrolments consultant or Director, as required.
- Reading the child's enrolment forms prior to the child's commencement in their classroom.





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- Ensure that new children starting have a locker and a locker tag prepared.
- Provide new families with an overview of the routine on commencement.
- Developing strategies to assist new families to:
 - feel welcomed into the service;
 - become familiar with service policies and procedures;
 - to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child.
- Providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members.
- Sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress with regard to settling into the service.

Families are responsible for:

- Reading and complying with this policy.
- Giving the appropriate notice times for absences, change of days or withdrawal.
- Conducting themselves in a courteous and respectful way at all times while on premises at an Orchard Early Learning Centre or Orchard Early Learning Centre event.
- Informing Orchard Early Learning Centre with regular updates relating to; immunisations and illnesses, parent / guardian contact details (phone, emails), changes in the home environment.

EVALUATION

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 12 months.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure.

RELATED LEGISLATION, GUIDELINES, STANDARDS, FRAMEWORK

- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children - Standard 5.1, 5.2
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities - Standard 6.1
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership - Standard 7.1
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 167, 170, 176
- Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 102, 102D, 160, 161, 162, 168(2)(k), 177, 183
- Privacy Act 1988
- Public Health Act 2010 No 127: Part 5 Division 4, Section 87
- Health records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- Family Assistance Law www.dese.gov.au





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RESOURCES / USEFUL LINKS

- Priority of Access Guidelines for child care services www.dese.gov.au/early-childhood-and-child-care-case-studies/resources/priority-access-guidelines-child-care-services

POLICY REVIEW

The Service encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

Date(s) reviewed: June 2021 / February 2022/ July 2022 / January 2023 / January 2024

Next Review: January 2025

