



Enrolment and Orientation Policy

Background

For many children and their families, commencing childcare is their first experience of separation. It is an experience that can be daunting and should be managed so that the process is as smooth as possible for all involved, especially the child.

The experiences of families and their children during the enrolment and orientation processes strongly influence the quality of their future relationships with the Service.

Policy statement

This Policy outlines the way the Service welcomes parents and their children, informs them about the Service's policies and procedures, and gathers the information necessary to ensure the safety, education and care of the children.

Strategies and practices

- The Service follows the Australian Government's "Priority of Access Guidelines" for allocating childcare places. Once these Guidelines are met, the Service prioritises siblings of children who are already attending.
- During the initial contact, parents are provided with a link to the online enrolment form via email.
- When parents have completed the online enrollment, an orientation time is communicated to them. Families attend with all caregivers if able and the child/children they are wanting to enroll.
- WEMOOSH acknowledges that smaller orientation groups mean that the Coordinator or designated staff member can capture the parents' voices with more efficiency. Therefore, the service will schedule smaller groups for orientations even one-on-one if deemed necessary for the capturing of parents voices regarding their child/children.
- At Orientation, they are shown through the Service and provided with information about its operation (e.g. opening and closing times, program, meals, policies and procedures, fees, documentation required before commencing at the Service and tailored orientation). Possible start dates are discussed. Parents are also invited to ask any questions they may have. This time will also be used to get photos of the child and family for our portfolio system to help educators identify new children and families.
- Families are also provided with any additional forms that need to be completed and returned before enrolment can proceed.

- The Nominated Supervisor or delegated staff ascertains if the child has any special education and care requirements (e.g. medical, English as a second language) so that these needs can be met by the Service from the child's first day of attendance.
- A request of days is sent to the family which they need to accept.
- Parents are told to go online to MYGOV and approve the enrolment once they have accepted the days. This information is required prior to formal enrolment.
- The Nominated Supervisor or delegated staff informs parents that every child and family respond differently to starting childcare, especially if it is the first time that children and families have been separated for any lengthy period. They are also told that, at enrolment time, educators and parents will plan to ensure the child settles in as smoothly and as quickly as possible.

Enrolment form

- The enrolment form contains the following details:
 - Full name, date of birth and address of the child
 - Name, address and contact details of:
 - each known parent of the child.
 - any person who is to be notified of an emergency involving the child if neither parent of the child can be immediately contacted; and, any person who is an authorised nominee.
 - The name of any person who is authorised to consent to medical treatment of, or to authorise administration of medication to, the child;
 - and any person who is authorised to authorise an educator to take the child outside the education and care service premises.
 - Details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans provided to the approved provider relating to powers, duties, responsibilities or authorities of any person in relation to the child or access to the child.
 - Details of any other court orders provided to the approved provider relating to the child's residence or the child's contact with a parent or other person.
 - Gender of the child or any gender-neutral preference
 - Language used in the child's home
 - Cultural background of the child and, if applicable, of the child's parents.
 - Any special considerations for the child, such as any cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional needs.
 - Parents are asked to sign an agreement on the enrolment form authorising the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or an educator to: seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service; arrange transportation of the child by an ambulance service; and, if relevant, take the child on regular outings. Refer to the Service's *Excursion Policy*.
- Parents are to provide the following health information.
 - Name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service and the child's Medicare details.
 - Details of any specific healthcare needs or known medical conditions such as allergies, asthma, diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis.
 - Any Medical Management Plan and Risk Minimisation Plan to be followed with respect to a specific healthcare need or medical condition (e.g. asthma, allergy, anaphylaxis, diabetes).
 - Details of any dietary restrictions for the child.
 - Immunisation status of the child. Refer to the Service's *Immunisation of Children and Staff Policy*.

- Parents are provided with written information about fee structure. All payments are made electronically through direct debit. A direct debit form is requested to be completed in the orientation process. Payments are made fortnightly and kept two weeks in advance.
- The Service's Policies and Procedures are discussed, and parents' attention drawn to specific policies (e.g. *Sun Protection, Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Handwashing*) and aspects of those policies that require their support and cooperation (e.g. ensuring current contact information, appropriate food and drink items provided from home, providing a hat, labelling of all clothes and other personal items). Parents are then shown where they can readily access these Policies and Procedures online, the Parent Library and other resources.
- The Nominated Supervisor or delegated staff speaks to the parents about the various ways the Service communicates with them (e.g. face-to-face, notice boards, emails, newsletters, feedback book, social media) and ways that parents can converse with the Service (e.g. face-to-face, surveys, email, social media, website). The information provided by the Service is intended to be easily understood by all parents, including those for whom English is a second language.
- Parents are also asked the most suitable way to exchange information about their child's specific needs so that the educators can work with the parents to meet those needs.
- Once the child commences at the Service, parents are contacted at any time the child becomes distressed or feeling unwell.
- At the end of the enrolment and orientation, parents are asked to complete an Enrolment and Orientation Checklist which provides feedback on how to improve these processes.

Responsibilities of parents

- To provide the Service with information about their family and their child's needs and interests.
- To provide all of the required documentation.
- To read and discuss Service policies and procedures.

Procedure and forms

- Enrolment and Orientation Checklist
- Family and Child Information Survey
- Family Handbook

Links to other policies

- Administration of Medication Policy
- Educational Program Policy
- Excursion and incursion Policy
- Food Preparation, Storage and Handling
- Immunisation for Children and Staff Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Interactions with Families Policy
- Managing Infectious Diseases Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Nutrition, Food and Beverages Policy Relationships with Children Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Sleep and Rest Policy
- Sun Protection Policy

Reg s	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	78	Food and beverages
	79	Service providing food and beverages
	80	Weekly menu
	81	Sleep and rest
	85	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
	88	Infectious diseases
	90	Medical conditions policy
	92	Medication record
	93	Administration of medication
	97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
	99	Children leaving the education and care services
	100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
	101	Conduct of risk assessment
	102	Authorisation for excursions
	157	Access for parents
	160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider
	161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
	168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
	173	Prescribed information to be displayed
	177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
	181	Confidentiality of records kept by provider
	183	Storage of records and other records

QA	1.1.2	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program
	1.3.3	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.
	1.2.3	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world

	2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation
	2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented
	2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
	2.2.2	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented
	5.1.1	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included
	6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions
	6.1.3	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing
	6.2.1	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities
	6.2.3	The service builds relationships and engages with its community
	7.2.1	There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place

Sources

- Department of Human Services. (2016). *Child Care Rebate*.
<http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/child-care-rebate> accessed 26 December 2017
- Early Years Learning Framework 2009
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011
- Boyle, L. (2009). *NCAC Factsheet: Settling your child into care*
<http://ncac.acecqa.gov.au/family-resources/factsheets/settling.pdf> accessed 26 December 2017

Further reading and useful websites

- Department of Human Services – <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/> accessed 26 December 2017

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.

Version Control

Version	Date Reviewed	Approved By	Comments/Amendments	Next Review Date
1	8 January 2018	Dr Brenda Abbey (Author)	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018. Service to modify policies to its specific needs.	
2	22/3/18	Elizabeth Treadwell	Updated to incorporate WEMOOSH approaches	22/3/19
3	11/03/19	Elizabeth Treadwell	The addition of the Family Coordinator The inclusion of gender neutral in enrolment information	11/03/2020
4	09/05/2020		Overhaul of process	09/05/2021
5	21 April 2021		Added family handbook and information on smaller orientation sizes	20 April 2022