

Background

For many children and their families, commencing at an early childhood education and care service 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

Pre-enrolment

- The Service follows the Australian Government's "*Priority of Access Guidelines*" for allocating places within the Service. Once these Guidelines are met, the Service prioritises siblings of children who are already attending.
- THE NEW GUIDELINES ARE: -
 - **First Priority:** A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
 - **Second Priority:** A child of a single parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test
 - **Third Priority:** Any other child
- Within each category the following children are to be given priority: -
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
 - Families which include a disabled person
 - Families on lower incomes
 - Families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - Socially isolated families
 - Single parent families

- When there are no vacancies, the Nominated Supervisor may require a child who is third priority to leave the education and care Service, or alter his/her days, to provide a place for a higher priority child. **Families WILL BE informed of this in the Parent Handbook on enrolment.** A family will be given at least 14 days' notice of the requirement to relinquish a place.

CHILDREN OF EDUCATORS

- Educators must assume a professional approach in matters concerning placement of their child/ren at the Service: -
 - Visiting/feeding the child will be restricted to allotted educator breaks
 - Children of educators will not be permitted in 'staff only' designated areas
 - Educators will respect professional confidentiality when discussing other children
 - Where an Educator's child attends the Service, consideration will be given by the Nominated Supervisor and/or Sunkids Management, in consultation with the educators, about the appropriate placement of their child in the service
 - Educator's school age children must also be enrolled and have an appropriate curriculum available
 - School children who are sick or not at school for the day cannot be at the service
 - An Educator may be required to make other care arrangements if the Nominated Supervisor, in consultation with Sunkids Management, determines that it is not in the best interests of the child and the Service that the child remains in care at the Service

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS MEETING WORKPLACE, HEALTH, AND SAFETY OBLIGATIONS

- In order to provide safe and suitable care, the Service must follow a specified pre-enrolment process before a child with a special need commences in care see [Inclusion Support Policy](#).
- Other policies and procedures specific to some special needs may also need to be implemented e.g., [Medical Conditions Policy](#).
- Under the Workplace, Health and Safety Act 2011, Section 27, the employer is obligated to ensure the health and safety of the employees and any other persons.
- Under the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations, National Law: Section 3 (2) the objectives of the National Quality Framework are to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending education and care services. Should the behaviour of a child pose a threat to the safety of educators or other children, then it may be necessary to discontinue care. e.g., [Discontinuing care to a child Policy](#)

Pre-enrolment

- During the initial contact, parents are provided with basic information about the Service, its programs, routines, and fees, and are shown through the Service. When parents indicate their interest in enrolling their child, they are provided with detailed information about its operation e.g., opening and closing times, program, meals, policies and procedures, fees, documentation required before commencing at the Service and receiving a tailored orientation where possible start dates are discussed. Parents are also invited to ask any questions they may have. They are provided with a copy of the [Parent Handbook](#) to keep.

- The Nominated Supervisor 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. Parents are asked to complete the Family and Child Information Summary.
- Parents are informed of Family Assistance Law and are advised to contact the Family Assistance Office to have their eligibility for Child Care Subsidy assessed. This information is required prior to formal enrolment.
- The Nominated Supervisor informs parents that every child and family respond differently to starting in care, especially if it is the first time that children and families have been separated for any lengthy period. At enrolment time, educators and parents will plan ways to ensure the child settles in as smoothly and as quickly as possible.

Enrolment

- When a vacancy occurs, the Nominated Supervisor arranges for parents and their child to visit and become familiar with the Service before the child commences. During the visit, they are shown through the Service and introduced to the educators. At this time, some children like to participate in the activities while others prefer to watch.
- Once parents decide to enrol their child, they complete an enrolment form prior to their child commencing at the Service. 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.
 - 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.
- 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.
- 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 asked to complete a Family and Child Information Summary which provides some background information about the family and child: -
 - Information about the child's interests, needs, likes and dislikes
 - Cultural background, and any special customs and religious requirements to be respected
 - Food preferences
 - Routines at home
 - Toilet training needs
 - Names of family members and pets
- Parents are provided with written information about fee structure, payment regularity and options available e.g., EFTPOS, direct debit etc. Parents nominate their preferred method of payment at this time. The Service provides a statement of account to families each week via their preferred method either emailed or printed.
- The Service's policies and procedures are discussed, and parents' attention drawn to specific policies 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 and other resources. They are also provided with a Parent Handbook.
- The Nominated Supervisor then speaks to the parents about the various ways the Service communicates with them e.g., face-to-face, notice boards, emails, newsletters and ways that parents can converse with the Service e.g., face-to-face, suggestion box, surveys. 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.
- At this time, the Nominated Supervisor, the educators in the child's room and the parents devise an orientation plan to help the child settle during the transition from home to the Service (particularly during the initial settling in period), and how best to maintain continuity between home and the Service. Some children may need to visit the Service several times before feeling secure in being left by their parents. Some children can be left after the first visit, while other children may need to build from a short visit to a full day. The plan is flexible and can be altered at any time. It is crucial that the child feels secure, and that positive interactions are established between all parties – child, parents, and educators.
- Once the child commences at the Service, parents are contacted at any time the child becomes distressed. Parents are also informed about their child's day when they collect the child and are welcome to telephone the Service throughout the day for updates.
- 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.

Transitioning to a New Room

- Children are transitioned to the next age group when they are developmentally ready to move to the next age group and a vacancy occurs. When educators identify that a child is ready to begin the transition, and a vacancy is imminent, they contact parents to discuss the desirability of the move and to obtain their input.
- Once all parties have agreed that the move is in the child's best interests, a letter is composed formalising the agreement. It details the day and date of the move, the names of the educators in the new room and any other relevant information.
- Before a child/ren are officially moved to a new room, their current educators talk to them about the impending move and the child/ren then visit the next age group several times. The frequency depends on the individual children and their requirements.
- Prior to the child's official move, parents are encouraged to visit the child's new room and to meet the educators to ensure that they are aware of such matters as room routine, location of lockers etc.

Transition to School

Attending school for the first time is a major change for the child and the family. The Service recognises that parents play a vital role in the success of the transition and supports and works with parents to prepare children for school entry.

- Wherever possible, the Service provides families with information about the schools within the local community.
- The Service provides information to parents about children's readiness for school.
- Educators speak to children about starting school and ensure that the information they provide to children is positive and accurate.
- The Service liaises with the nearest schools and, towards the end of the year, arranges with the schools for several familiarisation visits for the children who will attend the following year.
- The Service coordinates the transition statements to be completed by the Early Childhood Teacher and submits these on the QCAA portal, with permission from each child's parent.

Additional safe practices for babies

- To be diligent in obtaining from parents upon enrolment all relevant information about their child, especially details on immunisation and medical conditions, together with dietary needs, and current sleep patterns, bottle times and other care routines.

Responsibilities of parents

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

Procedure and forms

- Transition Letter

Links to other policies

- Administration of Medication Policy
- Educational Program Policy
- Excursions and Incursions Policy
- Food Preparation, Storage and Handling Policy
- Immunisation for Children and Staff Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Inclusion Support Policy
- 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

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, National Quality Standard 2011

Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	78	Food and beverages
	79	Service providing food and beverages
	80	Weekly menu
	81	Sleep and rest
	86	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 for excursion
	102	Authorisation for excursions
	157	Access for parents
	158	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 documents
QA	1.1.2	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program
	1.2.3	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world
	1.3.3	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress
	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

- Services Australia. (2024). Child Care Subsidy. <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy>
- Australian Government. Department of adjust to childcare. <https://www.careforkids.com.au/child-care-articles/article/38/helping-your-child-adjust-to-child-care>
- Education. Family Assistance Law. <https://www.education.gov.au/family-assistance-law>
- Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 (2023)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (updated 2023)
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2020
- Care for Kids. (2024). Helping your child
- Services Australia. (2019). *Child Care Subsidy*. <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/> accessed 23 June 2025
- Australian Government. Department of Education. *Family Assistance Law*. <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/provider-obligations/family-assistance-law>
- Early Years Learning Framework 2009
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2018
- Care for Kids article. (2021): *Helping your child adjust to childcare* <https://www.careforkids.com.au/child-care-articles/article/38/helping-your-child-adjust-to-child-care> accessed 23 June 2025

Further reading and useful websites

- <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy>
- <https://www.education.gov.au/family-assistance-law>
- <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>
- <https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/early-childhood>
- <https://www.careforkids.com.au/>

- Services Australia. (2019). *Child Care Subsidy*. <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/> accessed 23 June 2025

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	Kaylene Harper	Updated to changed NQF requirements 1 February 2018.	January 2019
2	6 February 2019	Kaylene Harper	Accessed and updated sources and further reading/useful websites.	February 2020
3	29 January 2020	Kaylene Harper	Accessed and updated sources and further reading/useful websites.	January 2021
4	25 September 2020	Kaylene Harper	Reviewed policy. Accessed sources and further reading/useful websites.	September 2021
5	9 September 2021	Kaylene Harper	Reviewed policy	September 2022
6	6 October 2022	Linda Hollard	Reviewed policy Accessed sources and further information	October 2023
7	22 August 2023	Grace McKinstry	Reviewed Policy. Accessed sources.	August 2024.
8	1 July 2024	Tiffany Boeske	Reviewed policy Accessed sources and added Family Assistance Law link	July 2025
9	23 June 2025	Gen Mahaki	Reviewed policy, updated NQF references, sources, and useful websites	June 2026