



1.7 Enrolment and Orientation Policy

QUALITY AREA 1: Educational Program & Practice

Aim:

To allocate positions at the centre in an equitable and reasoned manner and to commence building a positive and ongoing relationship with children and their families.

Background:

Bellingen Preschool is a government funded, community based, non-profit child care centre, open to all members of the community aged between 3 and 5 years. However resources and positions for children are finite. The enrolment process must ensure that positions are allocated in an equitable manner. Priority of access guidelines are defined by NSW State Government funding Agreements – Please see Priority of Access Policy 7.3 for further information. Enrolment and Orientation procedures are an important aspect of building solid foundations for an ongoing relationship with children and their families. It is an important opportunity for sharing of information between the centre, the child and their family. Good procedures include consistent information around service operation and authorisations promoting compliance and a safe and secure environment for children and families.

Relevant Legislation:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regs 168(2)(k), 160, 161, 162, 177, 183
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Health records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- Family Assistance Law www.dss.gov.au

Links to National Quality Standard:

- 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 about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family well-being
- 7.1 Governance supports the operation of a quality service

Key Resources:

- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: <http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/NQF02-Guide-to-ECS-Law-and-Regs-130902.pdf>
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Goals:

- Enrolment and orientation processes are planned and implemented.
- Due consideration is given to culture and language in undertaking processes.
- Documentation, including authorisations, are completed during the enrolment and orientation process.
- A thoughtful process is planned in consultation with families, to orient a child and family to the education and care service.

Practices:

Pre-enrolment orientation

Our preschool welcomes visits from prospective families and children. The Director may provide the visiting family with a tour of the service environment and information that may include:

- Parent Handbook
- Discussion and tour of;
 - ~ service philosophy and curriculum;
 - ~ approaches to documentation, curriculum and planning;
 - ~ introduction to educators and staff;
 - ~ the physical environment;
 - ~ administrative matters, cost, and fee payment methods;
 - ~ how to provide feedback.

Offers of Enrolment

In September/October current families who have children returning in the following year are asked to select their attendance day/s.

Positions are held for families of children where they have not decided whether or not to return to preschool the following year or send their child to primary school. Parents are encouraged to make these decisions by the end of Term 3 if possible.

After consideration of access guidelines and availability of a position by the Director, the child/ren may be offered a position at the centre.

In September/October new families are advised of the Open Day/Orientation appointment and what is required to enroll their child on the day. Families are then offered positions for following year.

Placement is offered in a **two day package** giving 15 hours per week – 600 hours per year in line with **Start Strong** guidelines. Tuesday/Thursday is a 4 year old group who will attend primary school the following year. Monday/Wednesday and Monday/Friday are made up of 3 and 4 year olds. Wednesday and Friday also have children who require a third day (only if there is a space available). The family will be asked to accept the offer of the position.

Enrolment

The **Director will** conduct an enrolment process following the acceptance of an offer. An enrolment package will be given to the family and will include:

- A letter of Offer
- An enrolment form-that includes:
 - ~ Full name, date of birth, gender 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 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.
 - ~ 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.
 - ~ Name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service.
 - ~ Child's Medicare number (if available).

- ~ Details of any specific healthcare needs of the child including any medical condition.
 - ~ 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.
- A Privacy Statement attached to the enrolment form which details:
 - ~ the name 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.
 - An information booklet on the preschool, which includes;
 - ~ Current fee structure and payment details;
 - ~ Policies including, but not limited to, those required under Regulation 168;
 - ~ Information on National Quality Framework, National Quality Standards, and the EYLF;

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Maintain waiting list
- Offering places in line with this policy and criteria for priority access, and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy
- Storing completed enrolment application forms in a lockable file (refer to privacy and confidentiality policy) as soon as is practicable.
- 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 this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or staff under the Law (Regulation 157).

The Office Administrator will:

- Collect, receipt and bank enrolment fees.
- Update and maintain enrolment forms, ensuring they are stored correctly
- Respond to enrolment enquiries on days present and refer people to the Nominated Supervisor as required.

The Educators will:

- Act in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy.
- Respond to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the Nominated Supervisor.
- 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 this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or staff under the Law (Regulation 157).
- Developing strategies to assist new families to: feel welcomed into the service;
- become familiar with service policies and procedures;
- Help 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 in to the service.

Families will provide the following, prior to the agreed start date for the child:

- A completed enrolment form including authorisations;
- \$15.00 Administration fee;
- Current Immunisation records;
- Birth Certificate, Passport or other identification;
- Current contact information for parents and emergency contacts;
- Custody Arrangements

- ~ The Education and Care Services National Law requires our service to have details of all custodial and access arrangements.
- ~ Enrolling family members are responsible for informing the Director of custody and access arrangements on enrolment, and must advise the Director immediately of any subsequent alterations to these arrangements.
- ~ All relevant legal documentation is to be shown to the Director and a copy will be maintained in the child's enrolment record.
- Information on children's additional needs (including medical conditions, health and developmental concerns).

This information will be kept at the service premises in accordance with service policies and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*.

Prior to formally commencing at the service:

Parents are invited to an **Open Day** in September/October where enrolments are finalised. This provides an opportunity for children and families to participate in a variety of preschool experiences and engage with educators and peers. An opportunity for discussion and questions about the preschool is provided.

Families who are unable to attend or who require further orientation visits are encouraged to make arrangements for visits at mutually convenient times over the following few weeks.

A family member will remain in the premises during these orientation visits. The family must sign the visitors book/register on arrival and when they leave. The child cannot be left at the service until they have formally commenced at the service and are therefore not included in the ratios.

A Ready for Preschool letter is sent to the children shortly before they begin preschool. This includes;

- The days attending
- Information for parents on the value of play and suitable food for children attending preschool.
- A request to the family to send in a family photo and further information about the child's interests etc. that will be displayed for the child on their first day

Prior to the child's first day educators and staff will familiarise themselves with information about the child from the enrolment information provided. They will ensure they are aware of any medical conditions and how to manage them if required.

Upon commencement

On the child's first day of attendance educators and staff will welcome the family and the child, ensuring that there is a space ready for the child's belongings. Educators will reassure the family and assist with separation if required. Families are encouraged to contact the preschool to enquire about how their child is settling in.

The Nominated Supervisor will undertake a final check of enrolment details, authorisations and information updates prior to the family departing the service.

Evaluation

Successful orientation and enrolment procedures promote smooth transitions between home and service. Information sharing and the signing of authorisations ensure a safe and secure environment for the child.

Policy reviewed February 2012

Policy reviewed April 2016

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Date endorsed __August 2018____ Date to be reviewed __August 2021__