



## 6.1 Family Participation and Communication Policy

### QUALITY AREA 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

#### Aim

To facilitate family participation and open communication with Bellinggen Preschool by encouraging families to engage with their children's education and care.

To encourage families, educators and the wider community to help create a service that meets the needs of the children who attend Bellinggen Preschool, and to facilitate open communication through the enrolment & orientation process, policy review, feedback forms, the Management Committee, the daily program, documentation, formal and informal meetings, emails, newsletters & conversations.

#### Background:

*"Families are the primary influence in their children's lives; they often have strong beliefs and values regarding the education and care of their children. When families and services collaborate and build respectful relationships, children have the opportunity to develop a positive sense of self and experience respectful relationship. As well, the child, the family and the service do not exist in isolation; they are part of a much wider community. Children benefit from services engaging with local communities because these partnerships strengthens children's interests and skills in being active contributors to their community. Collaborative partnerships are achieved with the service's philosophy has a strong commitment to valuing diversity, inclusive practice and connecting to the community."*

Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) ACECQA (2018)

Family participation in the education and care service is an important part of making the service a true part of the community and creating an environment that is welcoming and inclusive and supports a sense of belonging for children, families and educators.

#### Relevant Legislation:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Early Years Learning Framework for Australia; Belonging, Being and Becoming, 2009

#### Links to National Quality Standard

- 1.2.2 Curriculum decision making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators
- 1.3.3 Families are informed about the program and their child's progress
- 2.1 Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
- 6.1 Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
- 6.2 Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing
- 7.2 Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community

## Key Resources:

- Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) ACECQA (2018)
- Raising Children Network – Involving parents in school and childcare – [http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/involving\\_parents\\_in\\_school\\_and\\_childcare.html](http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/involving_parents_in_school_and_childcare.html)

## Practices

### Approved Provider will:

- Ensure that parents may enter Bellingen Preschool at any time unless such entry would pose a risk to the safety of children/educators or breach court orders regarding access to children.
- Ensure that educators provide information to families regarding the content and operation of the educational program, in relation to their child and that a copy of the educational program is available for inspection.
- Ensure that families have access to documents regarding the assessment of the child's developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program and assessments of the child's progress against the outcomes of the educational program.
- Ensure that parents are notified of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs for their child whilst at Bellingen Preschool.
- Ensure that administrative spaces are adequate for the purpose of consulting with parents and for conducting private conversations.
- Ensure that parents are notified of changes to policies or fees and given adequate notice as per the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Ensure that a copy of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 is available for parents to access.
- Ensure that the enrolment and orientation process provides families with information about the philosophy, policies and practices of Bellingen Preschool prior to children's first attendance at the service
- Establish a Parent Committee to encourage family involvement in Bellingen Preschool Inc. The Parent Committee will elect representatives to oversee and chair meetings. Each Parent Committee meeting will have an agenda and all families will be invited to participate in the meeting. Parent Committee attendees will have input into the continuing improvements within the Centre. A Parent Committee representative will assist with staff recruitment, family activities, encourage community partnerships and service events. A staff representative will attend each meeting.

### The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Develop systems for families to provide feedback regarding the enrolment and orientation process and when reviewing policies and procedures to improve processes and practice.
- Ensure that parents may enter Bellingen Preschool at any time unless such entry would pose a risk to the safety of children/educators or breach court orders regarding access to children.
- Inform families about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints.
- Develop an enrolment and orientation procedures that ensures families are provided with information about the philosophy, policies and practices of Bellingen Preschool prior to children's first attendance at the service.

### Educators will:

- Inform families about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints.
- Be available for families at pick up and drop off times to pass on important messages and information about their child's participation in the education and care program.
- Encourage families to be involved in Bellingen Preschool and the program through feedback, visiting the service, bringing in items from the home environment and giving feedback on children's emerging interests and needs.
- Promote continuous open and honest two way communication with families to assist them to feel connected with their children's experiences in the Bellingen Preschool setting and to develop families' trust and confidence in Bellingen Preschool.
- Value parents as the first and most important educator in their child's life, seeking to share the parent's understandings, knowledge and preferences for their child and seeking to balance individual needs with practice in Bellingen Preschool.

- Recognise that because families, and parents in particular, are often busy with many competing priorities, they will need to consider a range of strategies to build and maintain relationships with each family.
- Make documentation available to families and prepare documentation in a way that is readily understandable to the parents of the child and to other educators.

**Families will:**

- Provide accurate information on enrolment and medical information forms during the enrolment process and notify educators when any information changes.
- Be invited to contribute to the quality improvement process within Bellinggen Preschool.
- Be encouraged to attend children's excursions to help meet required ratios and to support their children's knowledge of and engagement in their community.
- Be invited to assist with working bees in Bellinggen Preschool. These will be arranged from time to time to help maintain equipment and the preschool environment and will be a family event where children can also participate.
- Be invited to family events to be held periodically to help families network and develop friendships in the local community. Educators will be encouraged to attend these events.

**Policy Updated August 2018**

Date endorsed \_\_August 2018\_\_\_\_ Date to be reviewed \_\_August 2021\_\_\_\_