

ORIENTATION OF FAMILIES

Enrolment and orientation are an exciting and emotional time for children and families. It is important to manage this time with sensitivity and support, building partnerships between families and the Service. Such partnerships enable the Service and families to work toward the common goal of promoting consistent quality outcomes for individual children and the Service.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in their service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.3	Community and engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
183	Storage of records and other documents

PURPOSE

We aim to ensure children and families are provided with an orientation procedure that allows the family to transition into the Service positively and well-informed, meeting the children and families' individual needs. We strive to establish respectful and supportive relationships between families and the Service to promote positive outcomes for children whilst adhering to legislative requirements.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Orientation is an important process for children, families and Educators to gain vital information about the individual child's needs and interests. To enable children to feel safe and secure, and to set the foundations for a trusting partnership, we feel that it is necessary for the family to attend an orientation visit. This visit assists the child to adjust to a new setting and helps to make the transition from home to the Service stress-free.

The child and family are offered three one-hour sessions, as a minimum, in the week(s) prior to the enrolment commencement date to familiarise themselves with the environment. These visits entail:

- The first visit the parent and child stay together in the room for the one hour. The child may participate in the activities and experiences if they feel comfortable.
- The second and third visit will allow the child to be left with educators for a period of time depending on how the child is settling in. For younger children or children entering childcare for the first time, we try to encourage as many visits as practical for the family to ensure everyone is comfortable and feeling secure.

Prior to new intakes for the next year, we will conduct a Parent Orientation evening where all Parents, new and existing, are encouraged to attend (without their children) in a formalised setting. This allows them to meet the Centre Director and educators, hear about our service philosophy and key policies, view their child's environment, meet other families and ask any questions prior to their children commencing orientations and enrolment.

During the child's orientation, Educators will discuss the following in order to gain a better understanding in supporting the family:

- The cultural and/or linguistic background for families from non-English speaking backgrounds (external support may be required).
- The family's needs in relation to work or other commitments.
- The family's previous knowledge or experience of other children's services.
- Any additional needs of the child and/or their family.
- Any court orders that are applicable to the child.
- Service philosophy and curriculum.
- The child's interests.
- Family goals and expectations.
- Strategies to help settle into the Child Care Setting.
- Any allergies and emergency plans for the child.
- The Service and room routine.

MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE:

- The orientation process is well organised, flexible, and informative.
- The family and child/children are introduced to the Educators in the room.
- To create a welcoming environment and interact positively with the child and family.
- The child and family are respected at all times, acknowledging the individuality of each parenting style.
- Families are encouraged to ring, email, or visit the Service as often as they like when their child has commenced care.
- Families are reassured that if the child is distressed over a long period of time the educators will contact them.
- Support agencies are contacted for children with additional needs.
- Families know how to provide feedback.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Greet children and families upon arrival.
- Discuss with families the best transition process for the child.
- Encourage families to say good-bye to the child when dropping off.
- Phone families if the child remains distressed.

- Encourage families to stay as long as they need to in order to reassure their child.
- Seek information about the child and family throughout the orientation process.
- Create a welcoming and inviting environment.

DURING THE ORIENTATION OF THE SERVICE, FAMILIES WILL BE:

- Provided with an outline of the Service policies, which will include fee payment, sun safety, illness and accident and medical authorisation, and be informed of how they can access these policies.
- Advised of the service fees and the bond payment.
- Provided with details of our website www.balmaincareforkids.com.au where policies and procedures are kept for the service.
- Shown the signing in/out process.
- Advised of appropriate clothing for the child to wear to the Service, including appropriate shoes.
- Advised of what the child will be required to bring each day.
- Informed about wearing sun safe Hats and application of Sunscreen.
- Introduced to the child's Educators.
- Taken on a tour around the Service.
- Discuss medical management plan and allergies (if applicable).
- Introduced to the room routine and Service program. This includes online daily diaries, portfolios and the observation cycle.
- Informed about Service communication methods including meetings, interviews, newsletters, emails etc.
- Able to set Family Goal's for their child.
- Asked to confirm their preferred method of communication.

ROOM TRANSITION

- Children will only be transitioned when they are ready in all aspects of their development and in accordance with their age.
- Room transitions will occur when there is a vacant position for the child and mostly occur at the start of each year.
- Management will consult with families when a child is transitioning to the next room, discussing their expectations and requirement to ensure the child settles into their new environment.
- Management and Educators aim to ensure the transition between rooms is positive and smooth, communicating with families about how the transition is progressing.

SOURCE:

Education and Care Services National Regulation and amendments.

Managing Emergency Situations in Education and Care Services.

National Quality Standard (NQS).

Revised National Quality Standards.

The Business of Childcare, Karen Kearns, 2004.

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
NOVEMBER 2018	Amended details and wording of orientation visits for families	NOVEMBER 2019
NOVEMBER 2017	Rearranged the order of points for better flow Sources/references alphabetised.	NOVEMBER 2018
NOVEMBER 2016	New Format created and policy created	NOVEMBER 2017
AUGUST 2017	Minor changes made to the policy	NOVEMBER 2018
OCTOBER 2017	Updated references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard	NOVEMBER 2018