FAMILY COMMUNICATION POLICY

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

*‘Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children’s learning.’*

(Early Years Learning Framework, p.9)

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

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| 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. |
| 6.2.1 | Transitions | Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities. |
| 6.2.2 | Access and participation | Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program. |
| 6.2.3 | Community and engagement | The service builds relationships and engages with its community. |

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| EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS | |
| 86 | Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness |
| 87 | Incident, injury, trauma and illness record |
| 111 | Administrative space |
| 157 | Access for parents |
| 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 |
| 168 | Education and care Service must have policies and procedures |
| 172 | Notification of change to policies or procedures |
| 181 | Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider |

RELATED POLICIES

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy  Dealing with Complaints Policy  Educational Program Policy  Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy | Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy  Open Door Policy  Privacy and Confidentiality Policy  Sick Children Policy |

PURPOSE

We encourage family participation and open communication within our Service. Families are invited to attend parent information meetings and assist with projects in keeping with our open-door policy.

We aim to ensure open communication through the enrolment and orientation process, policy and statement of philosophy review, feedback forms, Family Committee, daily program, documentation, formal and informal meetings, emails, and conversations.

SCOPE

This policy applies to educators, families, staff, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

We acknowledge the primary and critical influence families have in their children’s lives and understand that effective relationships between educators and families are fundamental to achieve quality outcomes for children. Community partnerships that focus on active communication, consultation, and collaboration also contribute to children’s learning and wellbeing. Positive relationships with families help to build collaborative partnerships, as together we share a common objective and responsibility for reaching quality outcomes and goals for children.

We will provide regular information about the Service and ongoing opportunities for families to contribute in our curriculum. All staff will communicate with families in a positive and supportive manner that encourages respectful and trusting relationships.

Management will ensure

* all families are welcomed and respected at our Service
* information communicated with families is reliable and accurate, especially if it involves the health and safety of children, employees and visitors to the Service. (e.g.: Department of Health, Public Health Units).
* families are aware of our open-door policy, unless such entry would pose a risk to the safety of children/educators or breach court orders regarding access to children
* families are provided with a *Family Handbook* during the enrolment and orientation process
* the enrolment and orientation process provide families with information about the statement of philosophy, policies, and practices of the Service
* 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 viewing at the education and care service
* families have access to their child’s developmental records outlining developmental progress against the approved learning framework, as well as their strengths, developmental needs, and interests
* families are notified of any incident, injury, trauma, or illness that affects their child whilst at the Service either immediately after the incident or when they collect their child, depending on the severity of the incident. Notification must be made within 24 hours of the occurrence.
* the early childhood environment has an administrative space that is adequate for the purpose of consulting with parents and for conducting private conversations and meetings
* respect, confidentiality and sensitivity are key elements of effective communication with families
* processes are in place to communicate with families for whom literacy is an issue, or for whom English is not a first language
* fact sheets and brochures are printed in required languages and are readily available for families to access
* families are notified of changes to Service policies at least 14 days before making changes to a policy or procedure that may have a significant impact on
  + the service’s provision of education and care to any child enrolled in the service or
  + the family’s ability to utilise the service
  + changes to the way fees are charged and collected
* families are notified of any changes to the National Regulations
* the current Education and Care Services National Regulations are available for parents to access
* families are encouraged to contribute and share ideas about their child and provide suggestions/feedback about the program.

The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:

* develop collaborative partnerships with families that involve respectful communication about all aspects of a child’s learning
* inform families about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints- including any complaints about the handling of CCS
* be available for families on arrival and pick up to communicate about their child’s day through informal discussions
* encourage families to be involved in the curriculum, providing feedback, visiting the Service, bringing in items from the home environment, and giving feedback on children’s emerging interests and developmental concerns
* encourage ongoing open and direct two-way communication with families to develop trust and a collaborative relationship
* encourage families to contribute to the continuous quality improvement progression within the Service through their involvement in the self-assessment and QIP review
* provide families with a range of communication methods which may include the use of online platforms, emails, verbal communication, newsletters, Daily Report, Family Involvement Wall, sign-in sheets, Notice Board and notes sent home
* use a communication book with families as required (for example, behaviour guidance and inclusion support plans).

Families will

* provide accurate information during the enrolment process about their child including related medical and health information
* notify educators when any information related to the education and care of their child changes (Medical Management Plans, Court orders-parental orders, authorised nominee)
* participate in informal and formal interactions with educators to discuss their child’s learning and develop learning goals
* be encouraged to contribute to the learning program and share their culture, language and beliefs with others in the Service
* be invited to contribute to the quality improvement process within the Service
* be encouraged to attend children’s excursions to help meet required ratios and support their children’s knowledge of and engagement in their community
* be invited to assist with working bees held at the service
* be invited to events held periodically to help families network and develop friendships in the local community
* be invited to review the service’s policies and routines.

Source

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government. Department of Education, Skills and Employment. *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. (2009).

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653?query=((Repealed%3DN+AND+PrintType%3D%22act.reprint%22+AND+PitValid%3D@pointInTime(20200831000000))+OR+(Repealed%3DN+AND+PrintType%3D%22reprint%22+AND+PitValid%3D@pointInTime(20200831000000))+OR+(Repealed%3DN+AND+(PrintType%3D%22epi.reprint%22+OR+PrintType%3D%22epi.electronic%22)+AND+PitValid%3D@pointInTime(20200831000000)))+AND+Content%3D(%22early%22+AND+%22childhood%22)&dQuery=Document+Types%3D%22%3Cspan+class%3D%27dq-highlight%27%3EActs%3C/span%3E,+%3Cspan+class%3D%27dq-highlight%27%3ERegulations%3C/span%3E,+%3Cspan+class%3D%27dq-highlight%27%3EEPIs%3C/span%3E%22,+Search+In%3D%22%3Cspan+class%3D%27dq-highlight%27%3EAll+Content%3C/span%3E%22,+All+Words%3D%22%3Cspan+class%3D%27dq-highlight%27%3Eearly+childhood%3C/span%3E%22,+Point+In+Time%3D%22%3Cspan+class%3D%27dq-highlight%27%3E31/08/2020%3C/span%3E%22). (2011).

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Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

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REVIEW

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| POLICY REVIEWED BY | Alisha De Groot | Director | | 5.05.2022 |
| POLICY REVIEWED | MAY 2022 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | | MAY 2023 |
| MODIFICATIONS | * minor formatting edits within text * hyperlinks checked and repaired as required | | | |
| POLICY REVIEWED | PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS | | NEXT REVIEW DATE | |
| MAY 2021 | * New policy developed | | MAY 2022 | |