

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Enrolment and Orientation



Introduction

Kootingal & District Preschool will implement a process to ensure enrolment and orientation processes are planned and implemented to meet the needs of the child and family as well as ensuring all legislative requirements, including the Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines and Start Strong Guidelines are adhered to. A child must be at least three years old to be eligible to attend.

We will ensure:

- Children are provided with support and comfort to settle into the service and establish new friendships and relationships
- A thoughtful process is planned in consultation with families, to assist in separating from their child
- Educators are provided with a clearly explained enrolment process; time to get to know families before each child starts; strategies to support families in introducing children to our service, time to develop close professional relationships with families; support from referral agencies; and information about custodial issues
- Home language, cultural background and family priorities are considered at all times during the process.

Goals – What are we going to do?

Enrolment and orientation procedures form the foundation for strong relationships between families and early education and care settings and promote a quality experience of education and care for children.

Good procedures include consistent information around service operation and authorisations, promoting compliance and a safe and secure environment for children and families.

Strategies – To achieve our goals

Enrolment

Providers can set their own rules for deciding who receives a place. There are no requirements for filling vacancies. Providers are asked to (but are not legally obliged to) prioritise children who are:

- at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
- a child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment.

This meets the Australian Government's aims of helping families who are most in need and supporting the safety and wellbeing of children at risk.

Parents/guardians will be advised that families of children enrolled with lower priority of access may be required to alter their days in order to provide a place for a higher priority child.

Enrolment Form

The enrolment form must be completed by each enrolling family. Where enrolling families are not fluent in English the enrolment meeting will, wherever possible be conducted in the family's primary language. At enrolment, parents are encouraged to provide any further information about their child that will support continuity of care between home and the service.

The enrolment record will include the following information for each child:

- Full name, date of birth 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.
- Details of court orders relating to the child's residence or contact with a parent or other person.
- Gender of the child.
- Language used in the child's home.
- Cultural background of the child and child's parents.
- Any special considerations for the child (eg. cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional needs).
- 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.
- Authorisation for the children to be relocated in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- 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. Immunisation status will be updated when current certificate expires. The service will only accept an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement or AIR Medical Exemption Form as evidence of immunisation status, the personal Health Record (blue book) cannot be accepted.
- All information will be checked before enrolment is complete including the child's immunisation status.

Enrolment forms will be updated when a family's circumstances change, to ensure information is current and correct.

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 Nominated Supervisor of custody and access arrangements on enrolment and must advise the Nominated Supervisor immediately of any subsequent alterations to these arrangements.
- All relevant legal documentation is to be shown to the Nominated Supervisor and a copy will be maintained in the child's enrolment record.
- The service will strictly follow all court orders relating to custody or contact. Children will not be released to any person prohibited under a court order. If a prohibited person attempts to collect a child, the service may contact police for assistance.

Orientation

The orientation and settling in period will consider and respect the needs of both families and children. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to remain with their child when delivering or collecting them for as long a period as the parent/guardian and/or educators feel may be necessary to ensure the child's wellbeing.

We will always consider the feelings and time constraints that families may have in regard to participating in orientation processes and aim to make the experience a positive and welcoming introduction to the service.

Our service will provide options for orientation to the education and care service for families which includes:

- Inviting new families to visit the service with their child at times that suit them, to familiarise families with the service prior to the child's attendance.
- Providing all new families with a conducted tour of the premises which will include introductions to the other educators, children, and families, and that highlights specific policies and procedures that families need to know about our service.
- Ensuring each family is directed to the website to access the parent handbook
- The opportunity to stay with their child during the settling in process.
- Ensuring all new families are encouraged to share information about their child and any concerns, doubts or anxieties they may have in regard to enrolling their child at the service.
- Will also include communication about the service's child-safe practices in line with the NSW Child Safe Standards, including how families can raise concerns or complaints.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority / Responsibility For
Approved Provider	➤ Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011 with regard to the delivery and collection of children at all times. ➤ Providing opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and staff) for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program. ➤ Ensuring that enrolment forms comply with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 ➤ Ensuring that enrolment records are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 183) ➤ 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). ➤ Ensuring digital records are stored securely and protected from unauthorised access, in line with Regulation 183 and current cybersecurity expectations.
Nominated Supervisor (in collaboration with Administrative Assistant)	➤ Providing enrolment application forms. ➤ Maintaining a waiting list. ➤ Maintain an immunisation register using a system that works for the service. ➤ Collecting, receipting, and banking enrolment fees. ➤ 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 safe and confidential way (refer to the Privacy and Confidentiality policy) as soon as is practicable. ➤ Ensuring AIR Immunisation History Statements are sighted and recorded before enrolment is finalised, in accordance with NSW Public Health Act requirements.
Early Childhood Educators	➤ Acting in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy. ➤ Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required. ➤ Ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service. ➤ Developing strategies to assist new families to: - Feel welcomed into the service - Become familiar with service policies and procedures - To 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 into the service. ➤ Complete a 'Transition to School Statement' for all eligible children
Families	➤ Reading and complying with this policy. ➤ Provide up to date immunization records ➤ Complete the 'Start Strong Fee Relief Declaration Form' ➤ Providing a current AIR Immunisation History Statement or AIR Medical Exemption Form prior to enrolment.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps. The service will review this policy annually.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunities and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

Policy reviews will be documented through committee minutes to ensure transparent governance and compliance with Quality Area 7.

Links to other policies:

Fees

Dealing with Medical Conditions

Privacy and Confidentiality

Record Keeping

Withdrawal of a Child

Complies with:

NQS

Quality Area 5		Relationships with children
Standard	5.1	<i>Relationships between educators and children</i>
Standard	5.2	<i>Relationships between children</i>
Quality Area 6		Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
Standard	6.1	<i>Supportive relationships with families</i>
Quality Area 7		Governance and leadership
Standard	7.1	<i>Governance</i>

National Law

Section	167	Offence related to protection of children from harm and hazards
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National Regulations

Reg	102	Authorisation for excursions
Reg	160	Child enrolment records to be kept by the approved provider and family day care educator
Reg	161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
Reg	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
Reg	168(2)(k)	Enrolment and orientation
Reg	177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
Reg	183	Storage of records and other documents

Sources:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Privacy Act 1988 [cth]
- Public Health Act 2010 No 127: Part 5 Division 4, Section 87
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 [NSW]
- Family Assistance Law: www.dss.gov.au
- Priority of Access Guidelines for Childcare Services:
[https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/instruction_sheet_10 -
_priority_of_access_guidelines_for_child_care_services_0.pdf](https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/instruction_sheet_10_-_priority_of_access_guidelines_for_child_care_services_0.pdf)
- Public Health Act 2010 No 127: www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2010/127/full

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