

# Only Early Learning Centre



## Family Orientation and Enrolment Policy

Policy Number 33

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## Aim

Only Early Learning Centre aims to provide a smooth and positive transition for children and families from home to the service. Only Early Learning Centre aims to ensure that children are enrolled where there is a suitable vacancy, and where there is a match between the needs of the child, the expectations of the family and the service programs. At all times during the orientation process, the needs of the child will be paramount. The aim of the orientation process is to provide an opportunity to build the foundations for an ongoing partnership between the family and service.

## Who is affected by this policy

Children  
Educators  
Staff  
Management  
Visitors  
Families

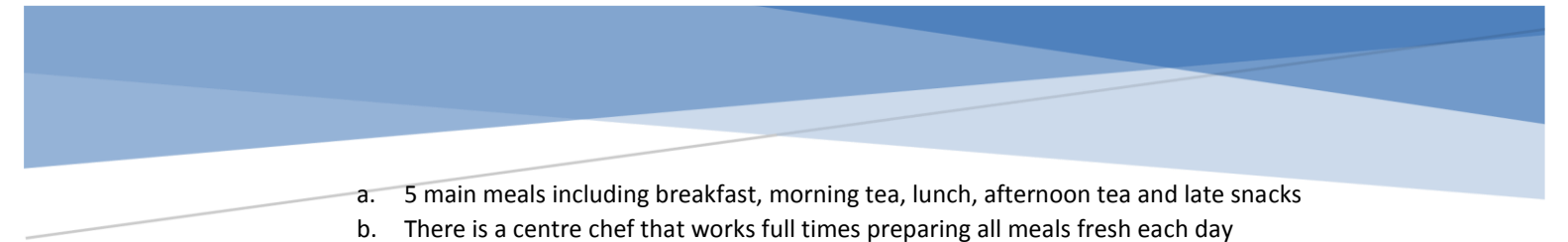
## Tour Process

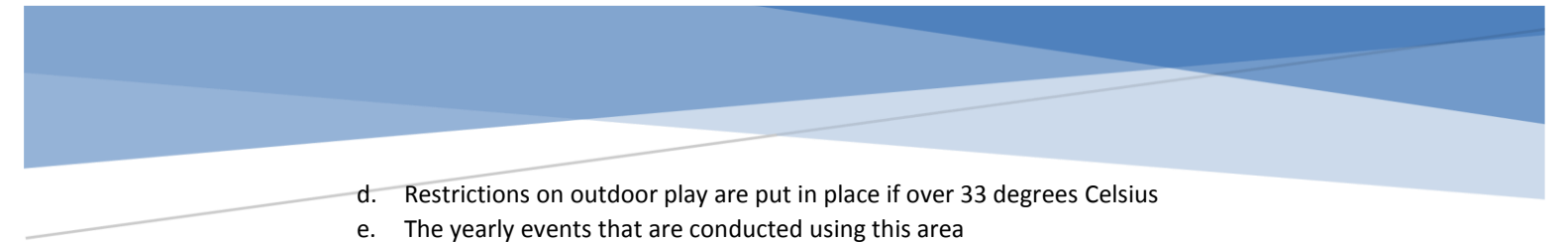
Families are able to visit the centre at any time to request a tour of the centre. Alternatively, families can book in a tour of the centre in the following ways:

1. Book in a centre tour through the service website online
2. Call the centre and enquire about tour times
3. Email the centre and enquire about tour times

When the family visits the centre for a tour, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The family will be greeted and introduced to the educator conducting the tour. Some basic information about the child will be collected, as well as information regarding when the family intends on beginning care for their child.
2. A centre overview will be given including:
  - a. An outline of the learning environments
  - b. The opening hours of the centre (6:30am-6:30pm)
  - c. Years the centre has been in operation
  - d. Weeks of opening each year (52 weeks, only closed on Public Holidays)
  - e. An explanation of the Educators wall
3. The family will then be invited into the relevant learning environment, there they will:
  - a. Be introduced to the room Educators
  - b. Have the ratio of the room explained to them
  - c. Explain the age range of the children in the room
  - d. The daily room rate for the room
4. General room goals will be explained including the main goals set for the children within the room throughout the time that they spend in there and an overview of the types of experiences that are provided for the children to participate in
5. Mealtimes will be explained to the family including:

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- a. 5 main meals including breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and late snacks
  - b. There is a centre chef that works full times preparing all meals fresh each day
  - c. There is a 4-week rotating meal plan which is on display in the foyer
  - d. Meals can be prepared to meet all dietary requirements, allergies and intolerances
  - e. Mealtimes are self-serve and are conducted “Family Style”
  - f. Self-feeding is encouraged
  - g. Alternative meals can be prepared for any child at any time
6. An overview of sleep times will be given including:
    - a. Shown cots/beds used
    - b. Cot checks if relevant
    - c. The centre provides bed linen
    - d. Educators remain with children until they are asleep
    - e. For younger rooms, the sleep routine can match their home routine
    - f. Any comforters used at home can be brought into the centre
    - g. The centre sleep approach is calm, positive, relaxing and no child is forced to sleep
  7. Nappy change area and process is explained including:
    - a. Family is shown the nappy change area
    - b. Centre supplies all nappies, creams and wipes
    - c. Children are changed at the minimum every two hours
  8. An overview of what is required for children who have milk or formula bottles will be given including:
    - a. A new bottle for each feed required
    - b. Make sure that every item is labelled
    - c. Families are required to provide a tin of formula
  9. An overview of Assessment will be given including:
    - a. Daily photos and programs
    - b. 6 monthly reports
    - c. Sleep time documentation
    - d. Mealtime documentation
    - e. Nappy change documentation
    - f. Bottle time documentation
  10. An overview of what the child needs to bring with them to the centre each day is given including:
    - a. At least one spare change of clothes
    - b. A water bottle
    - c. Bottles for each feed and formula
    - d. Any comforters required
  11. An overview of transitions will be given including:
    - a. Children are transitioned to the next learning environment according to their developmental readiness, emotional development
    - b. Relationships with Educators are taken into account
    - c. According to vacancies
    - d. Children are more often than not, not transitioned by age or birthday
  12. The family will then be invited into the relevant outdoor environment and given an explanation of:
    - a. The amount of time the children spend in the outdoor environment per day
    - b. Older and younger rooms are separated
    - c. The space can be utilised in rain and cold weather
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- d. Restrictions on outdoor play are put in place if over 33 degrees Celsius
  - e. The yearly events that are conducted using this area
  - f. Weekly extracurricular activities that are conducted using this area
13. At the conclusion of the centre tour, families will be invited to complete an Expression of Interest form. The family will then be emailed a copy of the Family Handbook and Educational Program Overview. The service and family will remain in contact and the family will be emailed a copy of the centre Enrolment Form, once they have confirmed their decision to enrol.

## **Waitlist Process**

All families who visit the centre for a tour will be invited to complete a Waitlist Application. Families can also request a Waitlist Application from the centre at any time. These Waitlist Applications are then filed into a folder in the office. All families currently on the waitlist are contacted every 4-6 weeks to touch base. This will include confirming that they would like to remain on the waitlist, checking that the current details are correct and requesting for the family to inform us if they no longer wish to be included on the waitlist. When a child terminates their enrolment, when a learning environment has vacancies, or at the beginning of a new year, waitlist families will be contacted and offered vacancies. There is no charge to join the centre waitlist.

## **Offer of Acceptance**

Where a family is offered a position at the centre, to confirm, the family will be required to:

1. Confirm in writing the positions that they would like to enrol for
2. Complete and return an Enrolment Form for the child
3. Make a bond payment of two weeks at full fees
4. Submit a copy of the child's Birth Certificate
5. Submit a copy of the child's ACIR Immunisation Statement

## **Stay and Play**

During the orientation process and prior to the child's first day at the centre, families will be invited to attend the centre for Stay and Play's. This includes visiting the centre with the child and allowing them to get used to their new environment, with the comfort of knowing that a family member is present. During Stay and Play visits:

- Families will be welcomed into the learning environment and be permitted to stay as long as they would like
- Families are able to visit at any time within the centre's hours of operation
- Families are able to visit the centre as many times as they would like
- Families will spend some time with the Lead Educator to ask any questions that they may have, and pass on any important information regarding their child
- Families will have the opportunity to meet with all of the educators in the classroom
- Children will remain with the class, and be invited to participate in all experiences

- Families are permitted to remain in the learning environment with the children, or to leave the child in the environment, whichever suits the needs of the child
- At least one family member is required to remain on the centre premises for the duration of the stay and play

## Communication of Policies and Procedures

All families are informed throughout the Tour, Orientation and Enrolment process that all service Policies and Procedures are available in a range of ways. These include:

- Through the service website online
- Hard copies can be found in a folder in the Foyer area of the centre
- Families can request a copy of any service policy or procedure at any time

## Communication of Account Information

Families are informed throughout the Tour, Orientation and Enrolment process that information regarding their account and payments is available in a range of ways. These include:

- Prior to the first fee payment, families will be made aware by Management of their statement, Gap fee payment, CCS entitlements and dates of direct debit payments.
- Each fortnight all families are emailed a statement of account, prior to fees being processed on Thursday.
- Families are able to request a statement of account or information regarding their statement at any time.

## Childcare Subsidy Information

As part of the Enrolment Form, families are required to submit a copy of the CRN number for both the child, and the parent who will be claiming the Childcare Subsidy. Management will use these numbers to submit a New Enrolment for Childcare Subsidy for the child using the QikKids management system. After this enrolment has been submitted, one of the following messages will be received:

### 1. Pending Eligibility

This message will be received if the Childcare Subsidy has not yet been approved through Centrelink. The family will need to keep in contact with Centre link regarding when the claim will be approved.

### 2. Pending at CCS

This message will be received in the Childcare Subsidy has been approved by Centrelink, but has not yet been approved by the claiming parent. The parent will then need to approve the claim through My Gov.

Once this has been done, a Confirmed By Guardian message will be received by the centre, meaning that the Childcare Subsidy will begin being paid to the centre on the families behalf. During the Enrolment Process Management will keep in close communication with families regarding their Childcare Subsidy.

## Health Discussions

As part of the Enrolment Form, families will be required to include any Medical, Dietary or Allergy conditions/requirements. This will include any medications that the children require, and any experiences or foods that the child must avoid whilst at the centre. This information, once received by the centre, will be discussed in further detail with the family. They must visit the centre to assist on the development of a Medical Management Plan. The family will also be advised of the items that they are required to provide to the centre, determined by the child's individual requirements. Families will continue to collaborate with the centre in the regular review of their child's Medical Management Plan.

## Equal Opportunity

Only Early Learning Centre is committed to the principles of Equal Opportunity in relation to community access to the service and acceptance of families and children. Where vacancies are available, equal access to the centre will be provided to all children, regardless of gender, race, religion, additional support requirements, family status or age. Where vacancies are available, equal access to the centre will be provided to all families, regardless of gender, race, religion, additional support requirement, marital status, political views, pregnancy or family status.

## Priority of Access

At times, there may be several families on the waitlist for positions at the service. To ensure a fair system, the Australian Government developed and implemented Priority of Access Guidelines. The following Priority of Access Guidelines will also be implemented when a Priority 1 or 2 child requires childcare.

### Priorities

1. A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
2. A child of a single parent or parents who satisfy the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the "A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999"
3. Any other child

Within these main categories, priority will also be given to the following children:

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Children in families which include a disabled person
- Children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold, or whose partner is on income support
- Children in families from a non-English speaking background
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents

If required, Only Early Learning Centre may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to create a vacancy for a child in a high priority group. This will only occur if:

1. They have been notified upon enrolment that the service follows this policy
2. The family is given at least 14 days' notice for their need to vacate the service

## Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy

Under the National Law and Regulations, Early Education and Care Services are required to obtain written authorisation from parents/guardians, and authorised nominees in some circumstances, to ensure that the health, safety, wellbeing and best interests of the child are met.

As stated in the Education and Care National Regulations, an Authorised Nominee means a person who has been given permission by a parent or family member to collect the child from the Education and Care Service.

Only Early Learning Centre will ensure that current Education and Care National Regulations are complied with, which require parent or guardian authorisations to be provided in matters which include:

- The administration of medication
- The administration of medical treatment
- Excursions
- Enrolment of children including naming of authorised nominees and persons authorised to consent to medical treatment of trips outside the service premises
- Children leaving the premises in the care of someone other than a parent

Within the Enrolment Form, parents/guardians must complete the Authorised Person's section, prior to the child attending the centre for their first day. The details of each Authorised Person must include the persons full name, residential address, telephone number and relationship to the child.

Educators will not administer medication to a child without the authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised person, except in the case of an emergency.

Educators will allow a child to depart from the centre, only with a person who is a parent/guardian or authorised person. Educators will request to see a copy of a person's drivers license to check that a person requesting to collect a child is documented as an Authorised Person in the child's enrolment form.

It is the Policy of Only Early Learning Centre that Authorised Person's are 18 years of age or older. This requirement can be altered if mutually agreed, due to individual circumstances, prior to the child beginning at the centre.

## Family Law and Access

The New South Wales Government has provided guidelines for Primary School and Early Education and Care Services to follow to support and respond to families attending the service with family law issues. The following guidelines will be followed by Only Early Learning Centre and aim to balance the rights and obligations arising under the Education Act 1990 with those arising under the Family Law Act 1975 and other legislation.

1. It is not the responsibility of Education and Care services to enforce Family Court Orders or resolve family law disputes.
2. The primary consideration for Only Early Learning Centre in family law matters which impact on a child's education and care will be the educational and welfare needs of the child.
3. Parents have the responsibility to provide the service with copies of any court orders that impact on the relationship between the family and the service.



**4. In the absence of a specific court order, either parent has the capacity to enrol their child in the Education and Care Service.**

A person forbidden by a court order from having contact with a child attending the service will not be given any information regarding the child, and will not be allowed to enter premises of the service while the child is attending, and will not be permitted to collect the child from the service. When situations change a copy of the Custody Order must be provided to the Service. Where confrontation situations arise over custody the child will be kept at the Service, the custodial parent contacted and if necessary, the Police and/or the NSW Department of Education.

The Education and Care National Regulations, Regulation 157 state the following in regards to Access for Parents:

(2) A nominated supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that a parent of a child being educated and cared for by the service may enter the education and care service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for by the service.

(4) Despite subregulations (1) to (3), the approved provider, nominated supervisor or family day care educator is not required to allow a parent to enter the education and care service premises if-

(a) Permitting the parents enter would

(i) Pose a risk to the safety of the children and staff of the education and care service

(ii) Conflict with any duty of the provider, supervisor or educator under the Law

(b) The provider, supervisor or family day care educator reasonably believes that permitting the parent's entry would contravene a court order



## Sources

### **Education and Care Services National Regulation 2011**

- 84 Awareness of child protection law
- 86 Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma or illness
- 94 Exception of authorisation requirement – anaphylaxis or asthma emergency
- 99 Children leaving the education and care service premises
- 102 Authorisation for excursions
- 157 Access for Parents
- 161 Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record

### **National Quality Standards**

- 2.2 Safety
  - 2.2.1 Supervision
  - 2.2.2 Incidents and Emergency Management
  - 2.2.3 Child Protection
- 6.2.2 Access and Participation

### **Australian Government, Department of Education, Skills and Employment**

### **Review**

The policy will be reviewed annually. Review will be conducted by management, employees, parents and any interested parties.

**Reviewed By:** Alex Jury    **Date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020

**Approved By:** Kelly Williams

**Date for Next Review:** April 2021