

# **ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY January 2018**

## **Purpose**

Montessori Works has clear guidelines on waitlist and enrolment procedures that comply with legislative and regulatory requirements and aims to build strong relationships with the families whose children attend the service.

## **Responsibilities for the Approved Provider**

The Approved Provider of an education and care service must -

- Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 with regard to the delivery and collection of children at all times.
- Provide 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.
- Ensure that enrolment forms comply with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162.
- Ensure that enrolment records are stored in a safe and secure place, and are kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service.
- Ensure 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.

## **Responsibilities for the Nominated Supervisor**

The Nominated Supervisor of an education and care service must –

- Provide enrolment application forms.
- Maintain a waiting list.
- Collecting, receipting and banking enrolment fees.
- Offer places in line with this policy and the criteria for priority of access.
- Providing relevant paperwork to families' in accordance with this policy.
- Provide a monthly report to the approved provider regarding the status of enrolments.
- Store completed enrolment application forms in a lockable file as is practicable.

## **Responsibilities of the Educators**

The Educators of an education and care service must –

- Act in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy.
- Respond to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required.
- Ensure that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service.
- Ensure that the 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.

- Develop strategies to assist new families to:
  - Feel welcome into the service
  - Become familiar with service policies and procedures;
  - To develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child.
- Provide comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members.
- Share information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress with regard to settling in to the service.

## **Responsibilities of the Family/Guardian**

The Family/Guardians of an education and care service must –

- Read and comply with this policy.

## **Procedure**

### **Waiting List**

Parents who require care must place their name on the service's waiting list by filling in the service's waiting list form. Waiting lists are kept in date order and must be updated every 4 months by the applicant. If the applicant does not contact the service within the 4 month period, their application is removed from the waiting list. Parents needing care for siblings of children already attending the service must put the sibling's name on the waiting list and will be given priority if a place becomes available.

### **Enrolment**

The Federal Government has determined priority of access guidelines for allocating places in a government funded childcare service. Though this is not a requirement, many services use this guideline.

1. Priority 1: A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
2. Priority 2: A child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work/training/study test, under Section 14 of the Family Assistance Act.
3. Priority 3: Any other child.

Within each priority mentioned above, the following children are to be given priority:

- Children in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families
- Children and families which include a person with a disability
- Children in families which include a person with an individual whose taxable income percentage under Clause 7 of Schedule 2 to the Family Assistance Act is 100%
- Children in families with a non-English speaking background
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents.

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

The Director/Nominated Supervisor will enrol children for one calendar year. All enrolments will be reviewed by late August for the following year. The review should cover all children enrolled at the service that are not going to school the following year, to ensure that priority of access is still being met.

## 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 families 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.
- 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 (e.g. cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional need).
- 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
- Child's Medicare number (if available)
- Details of any specific health care 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.
- Noted sighting of health record for the child by approved provider or educator/staff.

A Privacy Statement attached to the enrolment form which details:

- the name and contact details of the service
- the fact that enrolling parents/guardians are able to gain access to their information
- why the information is collected
- the organisations to which the information may be disclosed
- any law that requires the particular information to be collected
- the main consequences for not providing the required information.

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

On acceptance of a position for a child at the service, parents must arrange for a pre-enrolment visit with the Nominated Supervisor.

- Parents will be given a Family Handbook and key policies such as the Exclusion Policy, Child Protection Policy, etc will be explained.

- Parents will be informed about the types of assistance they can receive from the government but that this cannot be calculated until the service has received a copy of the assessment notice from the Department of Human Services.
- The Nominated Supervisor will give the child the opportunity to explore the room in which they will be placed.
- Families will have their photo taken with the child, which will then be attached to the child enrolment form so that staff can identify them and release their child to them if they have not had the opportunity for a pre-enrolment visit. Families will be asked to provide photos of the people nominated on the enrolment form as authorised to collect the child.
- The parents and child will be given the opportunity to ask as many questions as they like about the service's routines, policies and procedures. Parents will be asked to share any information about their child's individual needs, eg allergies, interests, etc.
- The parent will be shown how to sign their child/ren in and out of the service each day, the location of their communication pocket, the day book, the location of their child's portfolio, urged to apply sunscreen to their child when they sign-in each day and invited to give suggestions for and feedback about the daily program.
- The Nominated Supervisor will encourage parents to ring the service when their child is attending as many times as they like to check on how they are settling in, to receive reassurance about the care their child is receiving.

### **Parenting Order**

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 Director of custody and access arrangements on enrolment, and must advise the Director immediately of any subsequent alterations to these arrangements.
- All relevant legal documentation is to be shown to the Director and a copy will be maintained in the child's enrolment record.

### **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:

- Invite 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. Factors for consideration at arranging these times are the child's sleep needs, parents' working hours and specific individual needs of the child. Other family or friends who are nominated by the family as being authorised to collect the child should also attend on these visits if possible.

- Provide all new families with a conducted tour of the premises which will include introductions to other educators, children and families, and that highlights specific policies and procedures that families need to know about our service.
- Ensure each family has a copy of the Family Handbook and an opportunity to have any questions answered.
- Support family members the opportunity to stay with their child during the settling in process.
- Ensure 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.

### **Termination of Enrolment**

- Two weeks' notice must be given by parents when they are planning on withdrawing their child from the service, or two weeks fees paid instead of notice. If a child is withdrawn in the six weeks prior to our December closing date, fees are incurred until the service's 2 week December closure, regardless of whether two weeks fees have been given or not.
- Parents who are more than 4 weeks in arrears with their fees will be issued with a reminder statement which must be paid immediately. Parents are encouraged to negotiate payment of the fees if they are experiencing financial difficulties with the service's Director. If after negotiating payment plans, parents still fail to pay the outstanding bill, their child's place will be terminated and legal advice sought to recover the unpaid fees. The legal fees will be added to the unpaid account.

### **Related Statutory Obligations & Considerations**

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) - [www.acacqa.gov.au](http://www.acacqa.gov.au)
- Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000, included in the Legislative Extracts:  
[www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/child-care-benefit](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/child-care-benefit)
- Education and Care Services National Law 2010 Clause 13(c)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- Family Assistance Law [www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au)

### **Related Telephone Numbers**

- Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate 1800-619-113

## Amendment History

Version	Amendment	Short Description
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This policy will be updated to ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements every year. Appropriate consultation of all stakeholders (including staff and families) will be conducted on a timely basis. In accordance with Regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulation*, families of children enrolled will be notified at least 14 days and their input considered prior to any amendment of policies and procedures that have any impact on their children or family.

Date:

Version:

Last Amended By:

Next Review:

Position:

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