

QA6 – CHILD ENROLMENT, ORIENTATION AND PAYMENT OF FEES PROCEDURE

INFORMATION

Enrolment and orientation are an exciting and emotional time for children and families, and often represents a family's first experiences with childcare. We aim to build the foundations for an ongoing partnership between the family and our service. This partnership will enable the service and families to work toward the common goal of promoting consistent quality outcomes for individual children.

Families and children will be offered an orientation program. This is an excellent opportunity for the child to become accustomed to their new surroundings and to the educators in a relaxed manner. It is also a convenient time for families to receive comprehensive information about the service and ask questions. Although this orientation process is not compulsory it will help children to adjust to their new care environment.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All educators, visitors, students and volunteers must comply with this procedure.

PROCEDURE

OFFERING A PLACE

- Update the waitlist as needed.
- Places will be offered to existing families when a vacancy becomes available.
- Then, places will be offered, in the order of the child's placement on the wait list.
- If there is no current wait list, then a child will be offered the place.
- When increasing placements in rooms, educator numbers may need adjustment to ensure ratios are met.

ENROLLING A NEW CHILD

When enrolling a new child, we will:

- Ensure the enrolment bond fee is charged.
 - Collect a deposit to secure your enrolment. Children should begin care within two weeks of care offer.
 - Provide the families with an enrolment pack which includes the Parent Handbook to help them with their planning for the child's first day at the service.
 - Obtain a completed and signed Family Enrolment Form and supporting documents (i.e. proof of immunisation, health records, birth certificate, etc.) from the parent/guardian. Once all forms are collected, the child's details will be validated in our systems.

- Advise the parent / guardian that the enrolment record will be kept for the required period of time; this includes the authorisations, health records, proof of birth, immunisation records and any other documentation collected through the enrolment process.

Please note: The Nominated Supervisor and / or the Approved Provider, reserves the right to decline an offer of enrolment or suspend an enrolment as per our policies and procedures.

CONTINUATION OF ENROLMENT

- If an existing parent / guardian wishes to maintain a place for their child for the following year, they will be asked to complete a Christmas Holiday and Movement Form.
- Priority will be given to continuing families.

IF YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT FROM CHILD CARE

- Families are entitled to 42 absence days per child, per financial year, and may be entitled to additional absence days in certain circumstances (including illness of the child, a parent or sibling).
- Under the Child Care Subsidy (CCS), when a child does not attend care on a day they are scheduled to attend, providers are able to claim an absence for the child up to 42 times in a financial year, so long as on the day the absence is claimed, CCS would have been claimed (i.e. the child would have otherwise been in care, and the family hasn't already reached their fortnightly entitlement of subsidised hours based on their activity test result).
- **CCS WILL NOT BE PAID FOR ABSENCES BEFORE THE CHILD'S FIRST PHYSICAL DAY OF ATTENDANCE OR FOR ABSENCES AFTER THE CHILD'S LAST PHYSICAL DAY OF ATTENDANCE, UNLESS THE ABSENCE FITS THE GOVERNMENT CRITERIA FOR THIS SITUATION.**
- For more information on the CCS, please visit <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy/>

CANCELLATION OF ENROLMENT

- If a parent / guardian wishes to withdraw their child from the service, they must provide two weeks notice in writing, including the date in which the enrolment will cease.
 - Children must attend care on their last day to be eligible for Child Care Subsidy. If an absence is accrued on the final day of enrolment, CCS will not be paid and you will be liable for the full day charge for that absence, and any consecutive absences accrued directly prior to that day.

PAYMENT OF FEES

- Fees are required to be paid in advance and via the service's preferred method.
- Fee statements are provided to all families weekly.
 - If there are any concerns a parent/guardian should discuss this directly with an office team member.

FAILURE TO PAY

If fees are not paid within the required time, the service reserves the right to suspend, cease or terminate the child's enrolment at the service. If this occurs, the family will be notified in writing and debt collection agencies may become involved.

LATE FEES

- If a parent / guardian fails to collect their child from the service before the service closes, an additional charge of \$10 for every 5 mins (or part thereof) per child will occur.
 - This fee will be added to your account, and CCS will not be applicable to this late fee.
- If this becomes a regular occurrence, the service reserves the right to reconsider the child's enrolment.
 - We do request that you contact the centre as soon as you become aware that you may be late – this assists us with planning which staff will stay behind and also enables us to inform your child.

CHANGE OF FEES

- We review our fees twice every year.
- Fees will increase annually (at a minimum) from 1 July every year.
- Parents will be notified in writing at least 14 days prior.
- Additional fee changes or increases may occur at other times throughout the year.

WELCOMING THE CHILD AND FAMILY

- All families will be offered time to settle their children into the service prior to their first day.
- The orientation process will be discussed with families and agreed upon to suit individual children's needs.
 - During the orientation process, team members should support the child and family by:
 - Showing the family through the drop off and collection process e.g. signing the child in, applying sunscreen, where to put bags, etc.
 - Walking the family and child through the service to meet the educators, and see where the child will be playing and learning, eating and resting, using the bathroom etc. It is important that the child feels familiar with the service and knows where he/she can access facilities.
 - Talking to the families about ways to incorporate their cultural background, their child's individual routines, and how they can help to ensure the service feels like an extension of their home.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Date Reviewed	Modifications
Nov, 2019	Reviewed and created new policy document
October 2020	Reviewed by Management
January 2022	No changes
September 2025	Updated terminology and order of processes