



ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

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Responsible person	Nicole Crook	Scheduled review date	Feb 2019

INTRODUCTION

Patersonia accepts enrolments to the Early Learning Program for children aged 3-5 in accordance with funding priorities and guidelines. An orientation process is in place for children and their families. The purpose of this is to:

- Enable educators/staff to meet and greet children and their families
- Provide essential operational information
- Form the foundation for a successful and caring partnership between home and the service.
- To help children develop a sense of belonging, feel accepted, develop attachments and trust those who care for them.

PURPOSE

This policy outlines the steps to be taken to ensure the easy transition into the service for new children and their families.

POLICY

Eligibility

- Access and eligibility will be subject to the Priority of Access Guidelines set down by the Department of Education, these are:
 - Priority 1 – a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
 - 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 *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*
 - Priority 3 – any other child
- Within these main categories priority should 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 on low incomes
- Children in families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents.
- As Patersonia Early Learning does not have nappy changing facilities, children can be enrolled from the time they turn 3 as long as they are toilet trained. Where a child is not toilet trained Patersonia can assist prospective families by providing an action plan to support toilet training so that care can commence.

Inclusion of childrens' additional needs

- Provision of places for children with additional needs will be made wherever possible, with a regular review period. Access to care will focus on the needs of the child and the service's ability to meet these needs. Ongoing arrangements will be at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor in consultation with parents and educators.
- Staff will work with disability support and inclusion support services, both via correspondence and within the centre, when children need additional support. Changes will be made to the environment whenever possible to support the inclusion of children with additional needs. Staff will facilitate parental access to relevant services when they need the support. Refer to Policy 5.6 Inclusion for further information.

Waiting list

- Where demand for care exceeds the service's number of approved places, families will be placed on the service's waiting list. When completing waiting list details families will be advised of the Priority of Access Guidelines.
- Waiting lists will be refreshed annually by phone. This is an opportunity to update contact details and remove families from the list who no longer require care.

Enrolment

- Enrolments will be created in line with the Priority of Access Guidelines and the Child Care Subsidy IT System.
- Enrolments will not be accepted from families without full completion of the enrolment form, or online registration. Patersonia prefers that families enrol online and can facilitate assistance with this. Paper forms are available on request. To secure enrolment, parents are required to authorize a direct debit to pay childcare fees. Information about fees is included in the Fee Policy.
- Enrolments must be updated annually and as needed. This may be completed online or through a new enrolment form.

Attendance and enrolment records

- Accurate attendance records will be kept, which:
 - Record the full name of each child attending the service

- Record the date and time each child arrives and departs
 - Are signed on the child's arrival and departure by either:
 - The person who delivers or collects the child
 - The Nominated Supervisor or an educator (Regulation 158); and
 - Meet the requirements of the Child Care Subsidy IT System
- An enrolment record for each child will be kept at the service which includes all details outlined in Regulations 160, 161 and 162.

Child's attendance once enrolled

- The service's responsibility for the child begins when placed in the staff's care by parent or guardian, or when they arrive from school for the afternoon session. If a child is to be absent on a day they are normally booked, the family must notify the service as soon as possible. The rules for Allowable Absences under Child Care Subsidy will be followed in relation to all absences.
- If a child who is enrolled with the service, but is not on the Roll for a particular day, arrives at the service, the Nominated Supervisor, or other relevant staff member will be contacted immediately to see if the child has been booked in for the day. If not the child's acceptance on the day will depend on availability as determined by staffing, number of children in attendance and maintaining child to educator ratios.
- If a child has not been enrolled they must not be taken into care under any circumstances.

Cancellation of enrolment

- Cancellation of an enrolment may be initiated in two different situations:
 - A parent advises the service that no further care needs to be provided
 - The service identifies that care is no longer required or being provided
- The family must give two weeks' notice if they wish to cancel a child's enrolment; failure to do so will mean that any fees paid in advance will not be refunded. Refunds may be granted under exceptional circumstances after discussion with the Nominated Supervisor.
- CCS guidelines will be followed once an enrolment is cancelled.

Confidentiality and storage of records

- Enrolment information will be kept in strict confidence according to the services Privacy and Confidentiality Policy. All enrolment records will be kept in a safe and secure place and kept for at least the period of time specified in the Regulations (Regulations 158, 159, 160, 183). Patersonia prefers all records to be kept for 21 calendar years from the date on the form.

Orientation

- Families who are enrolling their child for the first time will be given a tour of the centre and given the Guardian Handbook which includes key policies for families. Families should read this handbook so that their child is prepared for their first day at the service.

- Families will have access to two orientation days free of charge. During this time the parent/guardian will be supported to play with the child and familiarise them with the layout, resources and routine of the centre. During this time children may not be left at the centre, but staff will provide an area for coffee and tea so that a parent can trial leaving their child/ren without leaving the premises.
- On their first day an educator will introduce themselves and guide parents/guardians through the sign-in/out process, check that all relevant forms and authorities have been signed and show them around the Centre.
- Educators will facilitate an easy transition by supporting children who struggle with separation using media/books, activities and family photos. The educator will remain with the child until they are settled and comfortable in the new environment. Educators will carefully monitor the child whilst in the service to ensure they are settling in.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Board will:

- Regularly review this policy in line with the Policy Review Schedule and any relevant change in legislation or standard practice.

2. The Business Manager will:

- Ensure that the induction process includes training in this policy.
- Where appropriate, delegate responsibility for compliance to officers with responsibility for particular sections.
- Oversee the performance of subordinate officers in these matters.
- Review and report to the Board, as appropriate, on the effectiveness of the management systems.
- Analyse material breaches and identified compliance system weaknesses for systematic trends and ensure that any adverse trends are addressed.
- Promote a culture of effective policy compliance across the organisation.

3. All staff and volunteers at all levels will:

- Ensure that they are aware of the organisation's policy and undertake actions consistent with it both on and off site.
- Where appropriate, suggest ways in which practices, systems and procedures could be improved so as to improve the policy.

PROCESSES

The Business Manager will review any changes to the organisation's procedures in all areas to ensure that these are in accordance with the principles expressed in this policy.

Staff and volunteers will follow these procedures.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Education and Care Services National Law 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2010 and 2014 Update (r158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 177, 183)

National Quality Standard (6.1, 7.3)

A New Tax System (Family Assistance Act) 1999
Network of Community Activities Record Keeping Factsheet
Child Care Services Handbook
Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Fee Policy
Statement of Philosophy
Governance Policy
Inclusion Policy