

FAMILY COMMUNICATION POLICY

Rationale and policy Considerations

Family participation is an important part of making the service a true part of the community. We believe in creating an environment that is welcoming and inclusive and supports a sense of belonging for children, families, and educators.

'Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning.'

(Early Years Learning Framework, p.9)

Legislation and Government Requirements

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (SA)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Privacy Act (1988) Commonwealth

National Quality Framework

Education and Care Services National Regulations 86, 87, 111, 157, 160-162, 168, 172, 181

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education – Elements 6.1, 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.2, 6.2.1

Early Years Learning Framework for Australia

Policy Statement

We encourage family participation and open communication within our Service. Families are invited to attend parent information meetings and assist with projects in keeping with our open-door policy.

We aim to ensure open communication through the enrolment and orientation process, policy and statement of philosophy review, feedback forms, parent committee, daily program, documentation, formal and informal meetings, emails, and conversations.

Strategies for Policy implementation

We acknowledge the primary and critical influence families have in their children's lives and understand that effective relationships between educators and families are fundamental to achieve quality outcomes for children. Community partnerships that focus on active communication, consultation, and collaboration also contribute to children's learning and wellbeing. Positive relationships with families help to build collaborative partnerships, as together we share a common objective and responsibility for reaching quality outcomes and goals for children.

We will provide regular information about the Service and ongoing opportunities for families to contribute in our curriculum. All staff will communicate with families in a positive and supportive manner that encourages respectful and trusting relationships.

Management will ensure

- all families are welcomed and respected at our Service
- ensure information communicated with families is reliable and accurate, especially if it involves the health and safety of children, employees and visitors to the Service. (eg: Department of Health, Public Health Units).

- families are aware of our open-door policy, unless such entry would pose a risk to the safety of children/educators or breach court orders regarding access to children
- families are provided with a parent/family handbook during the enrolment and orientation process
- the enrolment and orientation process provide families with information about the statement of philosophy, policies, and practices of the Service
- educators provide information to families regarding the content and operation of the educational program in relation to their child, and that a copy of the educational program is available for viewing at the education and care service
- families have access to their child's developmental records outlining developmental progress against the approved learning framework, as well as their strengths, developmental needs, and interests
- a weekly menu, which accurately describes the food and beverages provided each day, is displayed in a place accessible to parents
- families are notified of any incident, injury, trauma, or illness that affects their child whilst at the Service within 24 hours
- the early childhood environment has an administrative space that is adequate for the purpose of consulting with parents and for conducting private conversations and meetings
- respect, confidentiality and sensitivity are key elements of effective communication with families
- processes are in place to communicate with families for whom literacy is an issue, or for whom English is not a first language
- fact sheets and brochures are printed in required languages and are readily available for families to access
- an interpreter service is available to ensure communication with parents and families not hindered due to language barriers
- families are notified of changes to Service policies at least 14 days before making changes to a policy or procedure that may have a significant impact on
 - the service's provision of education and care to any child enrolled in the service or
 - the family's ability to utilise the service
 - changes to the way fees are charged and collected
- families are notified of any changes to the National Regulations
- the current Education and Care Services National Regulations are available for parents to access
- families are encouraged to complete surveys to contribute and share ideas about their child, provide suggestions about the program or give feedback

The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:

- develop collaborative partnerships with families that involve respectful communication about all aspects of a child's learning
- inform families about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints
- be available for families on arrival and pick up to communicate about their child's day through informal discussions
- encourage families to be involved in the curriculum, providing feedback, visiting the Service, bringing in items from the home environment, and giving feedback on children's emerging interests and developmental concerns
- encourage ongoing open and direct two-way communication with families to develop trust and a collaborative relationship
- encourage families to contribute to the continuous quality improvement progression within the Service through their involvement in the self-assessment and QIP review
- provide families with a range of communication methods which may include the use of online platforms, emails, verbal communication, newsletters, Daily Report, Family Involvement Wall, sign-in sheets, Notice Board and notes sent home.
- use a communication book with families as required (for example, behaviour guidance and inclusion support plans).

Families will

- provide accurate information during the enrolment process about their child including related medical and health notify educators when any information related to the education and care of their child changes
- participate in informal and formal interactions with educators to discuss their child's learning and develop learning goals
- be encouraged to contribute to the learning program and share their culture, language and beliefs with others in the Service
- be invited to contribute to the quality improvement process within the Service
- be invited to be involved in the parent committee
- be encouraged to attend children's excursions to help meet required ratios and support their children's knowledge of and engagement in their community
- be invited to assist with working bees held at the service
- be invited to events held periodically to help families network and develop friendships in the local community
- be invited to review the service's policies and routines.

Links to other policies

Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy

Educational Program Policy

Grievance Policy

Incident Illness Accident and Trauma Policy

Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy

Open Door Policy

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Sick Children Policy

Sourced from

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Government. Department of Education, Skills and Employment. *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. (2009).

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. -(2020)

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).

Raising Children Network Australia. (2006-2019). *Effective communication with parents: professionals*
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/for-professionals/working-with-parents/communicating-with-parents/communication-with-parents>

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).