

Orientation for Children Policy

NQF

QA6	6.1.1	There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families.
	6.3.2	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing relevant information and clarifying responsibilities

National Regulations

Regs	177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
------	-----	--

Aim

To provide children and families with an orientation procedure that allows the child and family to transition to their child being in care, transition to a new room within the service or transitioning to school.

Related Policies

- Enrolment Policy
- Family Law and Access Policy
- Parental Interaction and Involvement in the Service Policy
- Physical Environment (Workplace Safety, Learning and Administration) Policy
- Relationships with Children Policy
- Staffing Arrangements Policy
- Unenrolled Children Policy

Implementation

We believe orientation is an important process where educators are able to get important information about the new child's needs and those of the family. This process helps to make the transition from home to care as smooth as possible with the aim to maintain continuity between home and the service, which helps the child adjust to the new setting.

The Team leader will arrange for the new child to attend the service (together with parents/s) to visit and meet the staff, and familiarise with the environment. The children may participate in the activities if they so desire. A number of young children prefer to just watch, rather than do. Positive interactions at this time (between parents, educators and the child) are important for the children to build positive attitudes to the service environment. Educators are aware that some children respond to new experiences faster than others and will adapt to the situation.

At this time, the daily timetable and program will be discussed, as well as routines and any special requirements for the child that may need to be accommodated. Parent/s will also be encouraged to send any special comfort items (teddy etc) to help the child in the initial settling in period. Parents will also be invited to ring and check on their child at any time if there are any concerns.

Part of this orientation visit is also to explain/collect the required documentation for the child (enrolment form, birth certificate, immunisation record and medicare number etc). Staff will also explain modes of fee payment and communication (newsletters, pockets, communication box etc), what the child will need, the importance of labelling personal items and also show the parent library where they can access the service's policies and other resources.

Educators will also discuss how best to tailor the child's settling in period – our centre chooses to gradually build up to a full day so the child is reassured that the parents will return to collect them. Educators will encourage parents to say goodbye when dropping off – and reassured that if the child remains distressed over a period of time, that educators will contact them. Parents are able to stay as long as needed to reassure their child, but sometimes it's easier for the educator to settle the child if the parents come earlier on collection to spend time with their child – rather than do this at drop off time. We usually start with one hour by themselves and depending on the child build up from there until the child has settled.

Parents will be kept informed about how their child is settling in on collection and are welcome to discuss any aspects with the Child's team leader at a convenient time.

Information on the service's child orientation policy will be available in different languages when required.

Transition

The service aims to arrange for room transitions when a vacancy occurs or at the beginning of each term. As each room has different challenges and expectations, children will only be transitioned when they are ready in all aspects of their development. The opportunity to transition between groups / rooms at the service is based on many factors other than just age.

The service will work with the parents and the school to prepare the child for school entry.

Transition from one room to another

Change is harder for some children than others, however by making this transition as smooth as possible for children and families, we are helping build the child's success. Separation can evoke children's deep feelings which can trigger restlessness, frustration etc.

Implementation

As to minimise any distress that the transfer may cause;

- Think about the transition ahead of time. Lay the groundwork for a new teacher to get to know their child by sharing information and insights you have gained.
- Talk to families about how their child handles change and the strategies they use to help their child cope with change
- Plan to have the child and family visit the new group more than once if possible. At least two visits is required.
- Invite the new teacher to visit the child in their room numerous times
- Talk about change, starting from 2 weeks before the transition
- Don't talk about the transition in terms of concern or sorrow
- Talk about their new teacher everyday in general conversation
- Be sure to say goodbye.

Transition to school

When a child first attends school, there is a great change for that child and for their family. We believe that the child's parents are the most important link in this transition.

- The better the transition between home and school, the better the education: that's the message of recent research.
- The Service will always talk about starting school in a positive manner that will reinforce a healthy attitude toward the transition.
- If possible, information on local schools will be made available to parents.

Sources

Education and Care Services National Regulations

National Quality Standard

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually.

Review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties.

Reviewed: 10th February 2013

Date for next review: April 2016

Reviewed and unedited: June 2014

Reviewed: April 2015