



ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY P4.0318.3

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

DIVISION: Sport, Community and Activation

BRANCH: Community Outcomes - Family Day Care

CATEGORY: 3

PART 1 – INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Camden Family Day Care (FDC) child placement, enrolment and orientation procedures form the foundation on which we build strong relationships between families and the service and families and their educator and are the beginning of a positive education and care journey for children and their families.
- 1.2 Having sound procedures in place for placement, enrolment and orientation ensure our processes are fair and equitable and that the information collected from and provided to all families is current, consistent and complies with all requirements.
- 1.3 The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to enrolment and orientation.

2. OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 We aim to ensure that our placement, enrolment and orientation processes meet the unique needs of each child and family. This will support them during their transition to the service, help to develop collaborative partnerships, and promote a sense of belonging to the whole service community.
- 2.2 Our placement, enrolment and orientation processes will ensure:
 - Our waiting list is maintained, and placements offered in a fair and equitable manner, and vacancies are matched according to the wait list order of application and the suitability and needs of the child and family.
 - FDC educators and families have the opportunity to meet and decide if the placement is suitable for both parties.
 - All families are valued and respected and consideration is given to their home language, cultural background and family priorities.
 - Efficient and clear enrolment and orientation processes are in place.
 - Information is requested and collected which supports the individual orientation and ongoing needs of each child.
 - Information is maintained in a confidential manner.
 - Authorisations are obtained which ensure a safe and secure environment for each child enrolled and address regulatory compliance.

- Families are provided with consistent information in regard to the service's operation which is applied consistently across all FDC services.
- FDC educators collaborate with families about strategies for transitioning children into the service and information related to the child's needs.
- A thoughtful process is planned in consultation with families, to assist children with settling and separation.
- Children are provided with support and comfort to settle into the service and establish new friendships and relationships.

3. SCOPE

3.1 This policy applies to:

- Camden Council FDC Service.
- Camden FDC staff employed by Camden Council.
- Educators (including educator assistants and relief educators) registered with the service as agents of the Approved Provider - Camden Council.
- Children enrolled in the service and their families.
- Students engaged within Camden FDC services.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Approved Provider** means a person who holds a provider approval (*Education and Care Services National Law*). A provider approval authorises a person to apply for one or more education and care service approvals and is valid in all jurisdictions.
- 4.2 **Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)** means the independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
- 4.3 **Co-ordination Unit** means the Camden FDC principal office and main faculty for running the Service from which Camden FDC employees work.
- 4.4 **Educator** means an individual suitably qualified and registered by Camden FDC to provide education and care and can refer to the FDC educator as the business owner, educator assistant or relief educator.
- 4.5 **Enrolment** means the process of accepting and booking a guaranteed place for a child in a specific education and care service for the first time, involving completion of an enrolment form and provision of other documentation and often payment of a deposit. An enrolment occurs when the provider has an arrangement with an individual or organisation to provide education and care to a child. Making a request for care, or placing a child on a waitlist, is not an enrolment.

- 4.6 **Enrolment record** means a record required to be kept for each child enrolled at the service, with detailed information as prescribed in the *Education and Care National Regulations* (regulations 102, 160-162) about the child, including but not limited to; full name, date of birth, address, parent/guardian details, emergency contacts, authorised nominees, medical conditions and dietary requirements. The Approved Provider must ensure an enrolment record is kept for each child and the FDC educator must also keep a record of enrolment for each child they educate and care for.
- 4.7 **Family Day Care (FDC)** means a type of education and care service that is run from the educator's own residence or an approved venue for the purpose of educating and caring for small groups of children aged 0-12 years.
- 4.8 **FDC Service** means the FDC education and care business of each individual educator or reference to Camden Council FDC service.
- 4.9 **Nominated Supervisor** means a person appointed by the Approved Provider and who has given consent to be appointed to be in day to day charge of a service and must be contactable during the hours FDC Educators are providing education and care.
- 4.10 **Orientation** means the process to support the child's transition to the service, whereby families spend time at the service with the child a few times before leaving the child on their own. The time required for orientation and settling in will vary for each child and their family.
- 4.11 **Placement** means matching a child from the wait list to a vacant position within a FDC service. If the family chooses to accept the offered placement, they will then be required to enrol their child into the service.
- 4.12 **Priority of Access Guidelines** means the order of priority for filling vacancies recommended to be used by approved services in deciding who receives a place for available child care places where there are more families requiring care than places available.
- 4.13 **Staff** means employees of Camden Council FDC.
- 4.14 **Waiting List** means the central list held by the co-ordination unit of children requiring placement in one of our FDC education and care services. Families must complete an application form. Enrolment is not guaranteed. When a vacancy occurs, a match is found from the list in order of the date applied and suitable match between the child and family needs and the position vacant, the family is contacted and offered an opportunity to meet with the educator.

PART 2 - POLICY STATEMENT

5. PRINCIPLES

- 5.1 The wait list and process for placements are overseen by the co-ordination unit for all Camden FDC services to ensure fairness and equity for all families. Vacancies are filled from the wait list according to the date their application was received and the match between the family and child's needs and the vacancy.
- 5.2 Enrolment and orientation processes are planned and implemented with consideration to the needs and diversity of each family.

- 5.3 Enrolment procedures meet all legislative requirements and are implemented in a fair and equitable manner.
- 5.4 Information is provided to families about service operation and their roles and responsibilities in relation to service.
- 5.5 Each FDC service will have clear procedures and information related to enrolment and orientation that are relevant to their individual service.
- 5.6 Processes for the collection, use and storage of information are developed and implemented by both the service and the FDC educators.
- 5.7 Families are required to provide, and keep up to date, detailed and correct information about their child including authorisations and this information is recorded timely and communicated between the FDC educator and co-ordination unit

6. CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Considerations for the waiting list and child placements:
 - 6.1.1 Camden FDC has a central wait list for all families wanting a placement within FDC for their child/ren.
 - 6.1.2 Families must complete a waiting list application form to provide information about themselves, their contact details, the child's details and any health concerns, medical conditions or developmental needs and details of care they require including the days, hours and location of care.
 - 6.1.3 Vacancies are monitored by the co-ordination unit and reported through Harmony software as required by the government.
 - 6.1.4 FDC vacancies are offered to families on the wait list as a priority. Placements are offered in order of application date and prioritised by way of matching criteria, for example, days and hours of care required. Priority may also be assessed on a case by case basis relating to the need for care of the child or their family, for example, priority given to a child at risk of serious harm or abuse.
 - 6.1.5 Camden FDC has a designated Placement Officer role for the purpose of overseeing the wait list and the placement process.
 - 6.1.6 It is the responsibility of each family to keep the co-ordination unit informed of any changes to their waiting list application including contact details and details of the care they require.
 - 6.1.7 Where a family is referred to an educator for placement, they will be provided with the FDC educator's contact details and asked to contact the educator within 48 hours to arrange a suitable time to meet.
 - 6.1.8 Where a family is referred to an educator for placement but declines, they may choose to have their name removed from the wait list or remain on the wait list in the same position.
 - 6.1.9 Educators are responsible for communicating with the family to arrange a suitable time and for facilitating the initial meeting.

6.1.10 Each educator will have a customised process for initial meetings. They will show the family around their service and have a list of information to discuss including their educational philosophy, their fee schedule, their routines and information specific to their service such as intentions to conduct excursions/outings.

6.2 Considerations for enrolment:

6.2.1 Following the initial meeting, if the family and the FDC educator are both happy to proceed with the placement, the family is asked to contact the co-ordination unit within 48 hours from the meeting to arrange an enrolment interview.

6.2.2 It is understood that the enrolment is with Camden FDC and not the individual FDC educators.

6.2.3 An enrolment package including the enrolment forms and a checklist of required supporting information will be emailed to families prior to the enrolment interview, and families must provide all the required information to be eligible to proceed with the enrolment.

6.2.4 Families are required to disclose as much information about their child as possible. Information relating to medical conditions and developmental or dietary needs is essential in ensuring children are safe and the educators can best meet the child's needs and the needs of the whole group.

6.2.5 Medical conditions or diagnosed development needs of children require the development of a risk minimisation plan to ensure the educator and family have collaborated on the best way to manage the child's routines and needs whilst they are in attendance at the service. These plans are required as a part of the enrolment process.

6.2.6 Enrolment interviews may be arranged in person at the co-ordination unit or conducted over the phone and families must have completed and submitted the required information and supporting documents prior to the interview.

6.2.7 An enrolment checklist has been developed to guide staff through the enrolment interview and ensure all documentation is received and areas for discussion covered.

6.2.8 At the enrolment interview families are provided with further information about the service and encouraged to share information about their child that will support continuity of care between home and the service.

6.2.9 Children are only able to commence care after the enrolment process has been finalised and all required documentation is provided to the co-ordination unit.

6.3 Considerations for the enrolment form:

6.3.1 The enrolment form contains all prescribed information as set out in the *Education and Care National Regulations* and must be completed by each enrolling family.

- 6.3.2 A Privacy Statement will be attached to the enrolment form for the purpose of informing families of the service details, their rights in relation to accessing their information, why information is collected, to whom information can be disclosed and consequences for not providing required information.
- 6.3.3 Enrolment forms will be updated annually or when a family's circumstances change, to ensure information is current and correct.
- 6.3.4 Enrolment information must be kept by both the co-ordination unit and the FDC educator.
- 6.4 Considerations for custody arrangements:
- 6.4.1 The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* requires our service to have details of all custodial and access arrangements.
- 6.4.2 Families are responsible for informing the co-ordination unit of custody and access arrangements on enrolment and must also advise immediately of any alterations to these arrangements.
- 6.4.3 All relevant legal documentation is to be shown to the co-ordination unit and a copy stored on the child's enrolment record.
- 6.5 Considerations for orientation:
- 6.5.1 The orientation and settling in period will consider and respect the needs of children, families and the FDC service and should be decided upon collaboratively by the family and educator.
- 6.5.2 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.
- 6.5.3 Educators and families will collaboratively decide upon appropriate transition and settling strategies for the child.
- 6.5.4 Educators will have an understanding of how to appropriately support children with settling in and separation, and co-ordinator's will mentor and support educators as required with these transition periods.
- 6.5.5 Educators will have open lines of communication between themselves and the families and communicate regularly and effectively about the child's progress in settling and ongoing learning and development.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Approved Provider

- Ensure that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *National Regulations* are met.
- Ensure the *Enrolment and Orientation* policy and related procedures are in place.
- Ensure the nominated supervisor and co-ordination unit have access to appropriate resources for the development, implementation, training and ongoing management of this policy and its related procedures.

- Ensure waiting list and placement procedures are fair and equitable and follow recommended priority of access guidelines.
- Ensure that an enrolment record is kept for each child which contains all the information as well as authorisations from parents/guardians relating to medical treatment, regular outings, health information and transportation.
- Ensure parents/guardians provide proof of the child's age (e.g. a copy of the child's birth certificate) and an AIR immunisation history statement indicating the child is age appropriately immunised before enrolment can be confirmed.
- Keep prescribed enrolment and other documents, including a medication record and children's attendance record.
- Keep records confidential and stored safely and securely for the relevant period.
- Consider quality practice approaches to enrolment and orientation.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that Nominated Supervisors, educators, staff and students follow the *Enrolment and Orientation* policy and procedures.
- Ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to Nominated Supervisors, educators, staff, students and families, and available for inspection.
- Notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will affect the fees and charges and/or significantly impact the service's education and care of children or the family's ability to utilise the service.

7.2 Nominated Supervisor/ Team Leader

- Complete responsibilities as delegated by the Approved Provider.
- Ensure they conduct themselves and the service practices in accordance with all legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures.
- Ensure that regulatory obligations are met in relation to enrolment and orientation.
- Implement procedures for enrolment and orientation.
- Play an active role in monitoring each placement at the service to ensure the needs of each child and their parents/guardians are met.
- Ensure that an enrolment record is kept at the co-ordination unit for each child enrolled in the service which contains all the prescribed information, and ensure educators also keep a record.
- Support families' involvement in the service and contribution to service decisions regarding the enrolment and orientation of their child.

- Provide assistance for families to access information and eligibility requirements for the Child Care Subsidy.
- Endeavour to match families with educator's services taking into consideration accessibility, skills and location.
- Ensure families are aware of relevant policies and procedures at time of enrolment, such as:
 - Acceptance and refusal of authorisations.
 - Dealing with medical conditions in children.
 - Incident, injury, trauma and illness.
 - Delivery of children to, and collection from, education and care service premises.
 - Payment of service fees and provision of a statement of fees charged by the service policy and procedures.
- Promote quality practice approaches to enrolment and orientation.
- Provide all relevant documentation to the educator prior to care commencing.
- Ensure ongoing support is provided to the educator during orientation periods.
- Keep records confidential.
- Maintain a register of families requiring care, review and update regularly.

7.3 Co-ordination Unit Staff

- Ensure they follow Camden FDC policy and procedures and implement and maintain all requirements under these and as directed by the nominated supervisor.
- Implement the *Enrolment and Orientation* policy and procedures.
- The placement officer will oversee the wait list and placement processes, and other staff will play an active role in this process as required.
- Monitor FDC service vacancies and ensure vacancies are updated through Harmony software as required.
- Carry out enrolment procedures, following the service checklist to ensure all requirements of enrolment are met.
- Ensure risk minimisation plans have been developed and are in place as a part of the enrolment requirement prior to the child starting care.
- Communicate with the educator about the enrolment process, informing them when the child's enrolment is finalised, and the child can start.

- Monitor placement at the service to ensure the needs of each child and their parents are met.
- Ensure ongoing support is provided to the educator during orientation periods.
- Keep records confidential.
- Maintain a register of families requiring care, review and update regularly.
- Monitor and ensure educators practices and environments align with the *Enrolment and Orientation* policy and procedures and all required actions are in place.

7.4 Educators

- Ensure they conduct themselves and their FDC service practices in accordance with all legislative requirements and Camden FDC policy and procedures and as directed by the nominated supervisor.
- Educators are aware of and understand that in the case of a FDC education and care service the obligation of an Approved Provider is also the obligation of the FDC educator.
- Ensure that an enrolment record is kept at the FDC residence of approved venue for each child which contains all required information, including authorisations from parents/guardians relating to medical treatment, regular outings, health information and transportation.
- Keep enrolment records and other documents, including medication records and children's attendance record.
- Keep records confidential.
- Discuss with the family of a child being educated and cared for their right to enter the FDC residence at any time the child is being educated and cared for.
- Discuss the child's needs with families and develop an orientation program to assist them to settle into the FDC service.
- Share information with the family about the service including curriculum programming, regular outings and excursions, policies and procedures, routines, educator qualifications, what to pack for child, signing children in and out of care.
- Direct new inquiries to the co-ordination unit for more information, noting that waiting list application forms can also be accessed through Council's website.
- In collaboration with the family, develop strategies for settling and separation.
- Provide comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members.

- Be available to the family to answer any questions they may have, whilst ensuring they are not compromising the supervision of other children.
- Gather information from parents in relation to children's choices, interests and strengths to implement an initial program to engage the child.
- Communicate with the family about the child's interests and/or activities throughout the day.
- Encourage the family to call and check on their child's progress and provide honest feedback.
- Ensure families sign the visitor's register on arrival for the orientation visits and when they leave.
- Welcome the family and child on the first day of attendance and ensure there is a space ready for the child's belongings.
- In collaboration with the co-ordination unit update enrolment records annually or when there are changes to the family's circumstances.
- Advise parents that it is their responsibility to notify the co-ordination unit and the educator of changes to their details on enrolment forms.

7.5 Families

- Complete all documentation required by the service.
- Provide proof of the child's age (e.g., a copy of the child's birth certificate) and an AIR immunisation history statement indicating the child is age appropriately immunised before enrolment can be confirmed.
- Provide any required authorisations, such as for responsible staff or an educator to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service and, if required, transportation by an ambulance service.
- Provide any legal documentation relating to custody arrangements.
- Disclose any medical or developmental conditions the child has during the wait list process.
- Notify the service upon enrolment of any specific health care needs of the child, including any medical conditions and allergies and any medical management plans that need to be followed.
- Notify the service upon enrolment of any developmental needs or diagnosis and the management strategies for these and where appropriate provide supporting documentation such as management plans, doctor's letters or documentation from other professionals involved in the care and/or treatment of the child.
- Ensure all records are completed e.g., sign in and out register, medication form.

- Ensure all information about the child and family held by the service is kept up to date.
- Collaborate with the educator to support the child's entry into the service through an orientation program.
- Understand that the child cannot be left during orientation at the service and until they have formally commenced enrolment at the service.
- Provide a fully stocked bag for your child which may include spare change of clothing, sunhat, comfort items, bottles, lunch and snack (if requested by FDC educator).

8. INDUCTION AND ONGOING TRAINING

- 8.1 Induction will be implemented prior to an educator being registered with the service, focusing on this policy and related procedures.
- 8.2 Information will be shared with relief educators and educator assistants on induction and as relevant to the environments that they are working in, their responsibilities and the children in their care.
- 8.3 Ongoing professional development and training will be implemented for all educators and service staff. Reflection on enrolment and orientation procedures and practices will be included as a part of the annual review and re-registration process.

9. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- 9.1 This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this policy every three years.
- 9.2 Families, educators, and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.
- 9.3 In accordance with regulation 172 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

10. SOURCES AND RESOURCES

- [ACECQA Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- [Department of Education Skills and Employment \(DESE\) Child Care Provider Handbook 2022](#)
- [Family Assistance Law](#)
- [Health records and information Privacy Act 2022 NO 71](#)
- [Public Health Act 2010](#)

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RELEVANT LEGISLATIVE INSTRUMENTS: *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)*
Education and Care Services National Regulations
Family Assistance Law
Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002)
National Quality Standard | Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
Privacy Act 1988
Public Health Act 2010

RELATED POLICIES, PLANS AND PROCEDURES: Acceptance and refusal of authorisations policy
Dealing with medical conditions policy
Enrolment procedures
Enrolment records procedure
Governance and management policy
Orientation procedure
Safe sleep and rest for children policy
Safe transportation policy

RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR: Director Sport, Community and Activation

APPROVAL: General Manager through the Executive Leadership Group.

HISTORY:

Version	Approved by	Changes made	Date	EDMS Number
1		New	Feb 2012	
2			May 2019	
3	ELG	Minor Amendments	14/04/2022	22/177646