



## Orientation for Children Policy

### 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.

### Implementation

We believe orientation is an important process where educators are able to get 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 Nominated Supervisor 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, parent pockets), 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 – with some parents choosing 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.

Parents will be kept informed about how their child is settling in on collection and are welcome to discuss any aspects with the Nominated Supervisor 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. 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. When the child becomes of the age to attend school, 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. After consultation and approval with parents/guardians the child will be transitioned. Provide families with 'The Next Step' letter and discuss the benefits of change.

## **Implementation**

As to minimise any distress that the transfer may cause;

- Think about the transition ahead of time. Lay the groundwork for a new educator 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, 'The Next Step' letter.
- Plan to have the child and family visit the new group more than once if possible.
- Use the yellow form 'Staff information about change to children's bookings' checklist to ensure that all procedures are followed through, attached.
- Invite the new educator 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 educator every day 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.

**Reviewed: August 2019**

**Date for next review: August 2020**