

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

Enrolment and Orientation are an exciting and emotional time for children and families. It is important to manage this time with sensitivity and support, building partnerships between families and our centre. Such partnerships enable Highland Grove and our families to work toward the common goal of promoting consistent quality outcomes for individual children and the centre as a whole.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in their service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.3	Community and engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
78	Food and beverages
79	Service providing food and beverages
80	Weekly menu
88	Infectious diseases
90	Medical conditions policy
92	Medication record
93	Administration of medication
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
101	Conduct of risk assessment for excursion

102	Authorisation for excursions
157	Access for parents
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
173	Prescribed information is to be displayed
177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
183	Storage of records and other documents

RELATED LEGISLATION

Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017	Family Law Act 1975
A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999	See all related legislation for Child Care Provider Handbook in Appendix 1 https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook-0

PURPOSE

We aim to ensure children and families receive a positive and informative enrolment and orientation process that meets their individual needs. We strive to establish respectful and supportive relationships between families and Highland Grove to promote positive outcomes for children whilst adhering to legislative requirements.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the centre.

ENROLMENT

According to the Child Care Provider Handbook (Nov 2020) '*enrolling children is a requirement under Family Assistance Law for all children who attend childcare (or have an arrangement for care) regardless of their parent's or guardian's eligibility for Child Care Subsidy. An enrolment links the child, the individual claiming the subsidy and the childcare service.*' An enrolment notice is required for each child attending the service. This reflects the type of arrangement that is in place between the provider and the family/individual or organisation.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service accepts enrolments of children aged between 2 and 6 years of age. Enrolments will be accepted providing the maximum daily attendance does not exceed the licensed capacity of the Service and a vacancy is available for the booking required.

Please Note: We have a two-day enrolment minimum for our Sunshine (2-3 year old) room.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS

Our Service aims to assist families who are most in need and may prioritise filling vacancies with children who are:

- at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- a child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment.

Providers are asked to (but are not legally obliged to prioritise children). CCS Handbook p.51

ENROLMENT

To secure a child's position families are required to pay an enrolment fee and two-week bond which is calculated at full fee to secure the position. When 2 weeks' notice of withdrawal is given, the bond will be refunded if all accounts are up to date.

When a family has indicated their interest in enrolling their child in our centre, we ask them to complete a Waitlist Form and organise a tour. Once a position is offered, an enrolment email is sent to the family and an Orientation visit is provided. Our centre also holds an annual Information Evening (in November) to share information about the centre policies, practices and the curriculum.

ORIENTATION

- During the Orientation process, children and families familiarise themselves with the preschool environment and the educators on their room.
- During the Orientation process, families will be provided with a range of information about our centre, which includes:
 - the service philosophy, inclusion, our curriculum, incursions, excursions, fees, absences, Child Care Subsidy, policies, procedures, regulations and the licensing and assessment process for our State, signing in and out procedure, the National Quality Framework, room routines, educator qualifications and educator and parent communication strategies.
- Families will receive a Highland Grove hat and t shirt for their child.

- Families will be invited to ask questions and seek any further information they may require.
- Any matters that are of a sensitive nature, such as discussing a child’s medical needs, Court Orders, parenting plans or parenting orders, will be discussed privately with management or a Room Leader. Families will be required to bring any documents required in relation to court orders, medical needs or plans.
- Families will complete the Enrolment Form and ‘Getting to Know You’ Sheet, informing management and the educators in the child’s room of their child’s interests, strengths and individual needs, including health requirements. This document also gives families the opportunity to set goals for their child.
- Families will be informed about Highland Grove’s communication strategies including meetings, interviews, Day Sheets, Foyer Poster, Newsletters, emails, etc.
- If a family or child uses English as a second language or speak another language at home, we encourage families to provide us with some key words in the language/s the child speaks so that educators can learn these words. Educators may use visuals to assist the child’s understanding and be able to communicate with others.
- Families who wish to receive CCS as reduced fees must apply for CCS through the myGov website/app, this includes completing the Child Care Subsidy activity test.
- It is a legal requirement that prior to the child starting at Highland Grove we have all required documents, including
 - the completed enrolment form
 - medical management action plans (if relevant) completed by the child’s general practitioner
 - birth certificate or passport
 - a current Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) showing the child is up to date with immunisations for their age *and*
 - details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans
- It is a requirement of the Family Assistance Office that immunisation information held by the Service is kept current. Parents are reminded mid-way through the year to provide any immunisation updates to the Service in order to continue receiving childcare subsidy.
- Parents must notify our centre if their child is not up to date with their immunisations for their age via the enrolment form and attach the required documentation on their *AIR Immunisation History Statement*.
- Families are advised that since January 2018 children who have not been immunised due to parent’s conscientious objection cannot be enrolled at an early childhood education and care service.
- If a child cannot be immunised due to a medical condition they may still be enrolled at the Service with supporting documentation (AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form).

- If a child is on a 'catch-up' schedule for immunisations they may still be enrolled at the Service. The child's immunisation history statement will indicate that the child is on a catch-up schedule.
- It is the family's responsibility to keep the Service informed of any changes to the information recorded on the Waitlist Form.

ENROLMENT PACK

Once the enrolment fee and bond has been paid, families will be provided with an enrolment pack which consists of:

- Information Handbook, which outlines the Service's operation and philosophy
- Current fee structure and payment details
- Child Care Subsidy (CCS) information
- Information on the National Quality Framework, National Quality Standards and the Early Years Learning Framework
- Welcome letter, which includes the names of their child's educators. (We attempt to introduce the child and their family to as many of the educators on their room prior to starting) .
- Social story, 'Coming to my Preschool', which contains photos of the preschool spaces, the daily routine and the educators on the child's room.
- ECA Code of Ethics brochure
- Lunchbox and Snack ideas
- Munch and Move Fact Sheets

MANAGEMENT WILL ENSURE:

- the enrolment form is completed accurately, in its entirety and that the form is signed.
- All children's medical needs are shared with educators prior to the child starting at the service. (Medical Management Action Plans, Risk Minimisation Plans and Communication Plans are in place prior to, or on the first day of a child's attendance. Medication is brought to the service each day
- immunisation history statement and birth certificate have been sighted and photocopied
- the enrolment is lodged through our software provider.
- a file for the Child's information is created
- families are provided with an orientation survey to complete within the first 2 months of starting to gain feedback about the orientation and enrolment process.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

[Child Care Subsidy](#) (CCS) offers assistance to families to help with the cost of childcare for children aged 0-13 years. There are three factors that determine a family's level of CCS. These are:

- [Combined annual family income](#)
- [Activity test](#) – the activity level of both parents
- [Service type](#) – type of child care service and whether the child attends school

[Child Care Package – Information for families](#)

- Documentation may be required such as Australian driver licence, Australian passport, Foreign passport, Australian birth certificate, Australian Marriage certificate, Australian citizenship certificate
- Families are provided with a Customer Reference Number (CRN)
- Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction
- Families will contribute to their childcare fees and pay the Service the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount- generally called the 'gap fee'

ENROLMENT RECORD KEEPING

Our *Record Keeping and Retention Policy* outlines the information and authorisations that we will include in all child enrolment records.

ON THE CHILD'S FIRST DAY

Highland Grove has implemented a variety of tools and strategies to ensure a smooth transition to preschool for each child and their family, consideration and planning will then be made with each family regarding the initial settling in period and strategies may be offered to assist both parents/carers and the child. Families will be reassured that they are able to stay with their child for as long as they choose in the early days; speak to their child's educator at any time; contact the centre during the day to 'check' in on their child and request help with separation if this is a little difficult for their child.

On the first day, the child and their family will be welcomed by the Director or Room Leader and shown where or how to sign their child in/out of the centre, where the child's belongings are kept, and educators will chat with parents or carers about the child's collection at the end of the day. Communication is highly valued and important for a successful transition.

SOURCE

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

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2019) Child Care Provider handbook

<https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook-0>

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2019) Guide to Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)

https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/2019-11-28_-_accs_guide_o.pdf

Australian Government Services Australia

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register/how-get-immunisation-history-statement>

Department of Human Services (Centrelink):

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011)

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

NSW Government Health. (2019). Questions and answers about vaccination requirements for child care:

https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/childcare_qa.aspx

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Victoria State Government. Requirements for all early childhood services.

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/reqallservices.aspx>

REVIEWED: February 2021