

Policy title	6.2 Orientation
Policy type	Management
Group	Family and Children

Rationale

Moonee Valley City Council understands that learning and development outcomes for children are most likely to be achieved when educators/contractors work in partnerships with families. Families are the primary influence in their children's lives. Research on brain development and emotional intelligence suggests that children must feel secure, confident and valued for healthy development and effective learning.

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* (Regulation 168(2)(k)) requires an approved provider to have a policy and procedures for enrolment and orientation. This Policy and Procedures meet this requirement and are to be read in conjunction with Council's Policy 6.1 and Procedures for Child Enrolment and Attendance Records.

Policy statement

Moonee Valley City Council is committed to:

- ensuring that our orientation process assists children and their families in successfully making the transition from home to service-based education and care
- assisting our new families to gain a sense of belonging by becoming comfortable with our service, its educators/contractors/staff, policies and established regulars
- ensuring parents/guardians are involved in mutual decision making that impacts on the education and care of their children and reflects the service philosophy

For many children and their families, starting in an early childhood education and care service is the first time they have been separated for any length of time. Council recommends that families plan orientation times to allow the settling in process to

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occur gradually. Initially, the family should visit the service as often as possible. This will enable the child to explore the environment and allow families to become familiar with the layout and regular of the service. It also provides families with the opportunity to talk to educators/contractors/staff about their child's needs and to develop trust in the staff.

A formalised orientation process ensures the best possible start in an early childhood service for children, families and educators/ staff. A formalised orientation program:

- minimises distress for children new to the service
- allows for sharing of information
- ensures that parents/guardians are aware of the service's philosophy, Policies and Procedures

Families of children attending a Council education and care service are encouraged to participate in service activities. This can only be achieved by sharing information and expectations between parents/guardians and educators/contractors staff. It is recognised that families' needs will vary greatly in the orientation process and individual needs should be met as best as possible.

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Procedure	6.2 Orientation Procedure
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Action	Approved Provider	Responsible Person or Primary Nominee	Educator/contractor	Families	Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011	Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010	Children's Services Regulations 2009 & Children's Services Act 1996
Enrol new families following the requirements of this Policy and Procedures, and the Child Enrolment and Attendance Record Policy and Procedures.	✓	✓	✓	✓	r.160-162 r.168-173	s.175	r.28-35 s.32B
Keep and maintain enrolment records in accordance with the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i> , the <i>Public Records of Victoria Act 1973</i> and Council's Policy 6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records and Procedures.	✓	✓	✓		r.160-162 r.168-173 r.177-179 r.181-184	s.175	r.28-35 s.32B
Ensure educators/contractors spend time with families, sharing information and building relationships. If required, organise an interpreter.		✓	✓		r.355-357 r.363-366		s.27 s.29A
Provide families with the necessary paperwork for enrolment including a parent/guardian handbook with information about the service's philosophy, policies and procedures. Design an orientation program, in consultation with the child's parent/guardian.	✓	✓	✓		r.168-172	s.175 s.176	r.28-35 r.70-49 s.32B

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All required documents including authorisations and medical action plans must be completed and provided prior to the child commencing at the service.	✓	✓	✓	✓	r.160-162	s.175	r.28-35 s.29b s.32b
The orientation process is over a two-week period starting from the commencement of the education and care service that will be tailored to suit the needs of the individual child and family. The child's experiences during orientation are shared with families.		✓	✓	✓	r.355-357 r.363-366		r.50 r.53 r.60-61 s.27 s.29a
Have a thorough understanding and be able to articulate the service's philosophy and program and how it translates to everyday practice with children and families.		✓	✓		r.73-76	s.172	r.40-41 r.45-46 s.32b
Communicate with all families about the program and the expectations of the family within the program.		✓	✓	✓	r.73-76		r.40-41 r.45-46 s.26B
Provide guidance to families on where to find information regarding the service's policies and procedures.	✓	✓	✓		r.168-173	s.172	r.40-44 r.45-49 s.32b
Ensure families sign the Visitor's Record Book on arrival for the initial orientation visit and when they leave.		✓	✓	✓	r.165	s.167	s.26
Ensure educators are not compromising the supervision of children in care during the orientation visit.		✓	✓	✓	r.355-357 r.360-366		r.50 r.53 r.57 r.60-61 s.26 s.27 s.29a
After the conclusion of the orientation period, settling of children will be tailored to suit the needs of the individual child and family, as	✓	✓	✓	✓	r.168-172		r.40-41 r.45-46

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required. This process will be reviewed each year to ensure it meets the needs of children, families and educators/contractors.							
Families must provide information to educators/contractors that will support their children's transition.		✓	✓	✓	r.160-162	s.175	r.28-34 s.32b
Families should provide feedback to the service about their children's experience with the orientation process.		✓	✓	✓	r.168-172		r.40-41 r.45-46
Prior to the year a child begins kindergarten, children will have opportunities to visit the kindergarten to ensure smooth transition.		✓	✓	✓	r.168-172		
The session times that a child attends may be shorter in sessional kindergartens initially to allow for parent/guardian, educator/contractor information exchange sessions, and for the child to settle into the kindergarten environment, with fewer children and for shorter sessions.		✓	✓	✓		s.167	
If a child begins kindergarten later in the term or year, a specific orientation program will be arranged in consultation with the family.		✓	✓	✓			
Families must sign their children in and out on arrival to and departure from the service. Centre staff will show families this process during orientation.			✓	✓	r.99	s.175	r.29-30 s.32b
Families should ensure they are involved in mutual decision making that impacts on the education and care of their children and reflects the service's philosophy.		✓	✓	✓	r.168-172		r.40-41 r.45-46 s26b

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Transitions are about relationships and involve consistency and change. Families and educators/contractor will work together to make decisions regarding developmentally appropriate learning spaces that will contribute to the children's wellbeing (VEYLDF 2016).				✓	r.73-76	s.167	r.40-41 r.45-46 s.32b
Provide information to staff/educators/contractors regarding new families and children's requirements, commencement dates and attendance days.		✓	✓			s.167	
Child and family details are updated as required.		✓	✓	✓	r.158-162	s.175	r.28-34 s.32b
Review and evaluate enrolment process/procedures.	✓	✓	✓		r.168-172	s.175	s.32b
Complete an educator/contractor, parent/guardian agreement form with the family once the decision has been made to commence care.		✓	✓		r.160-162 r.168-173	s.175	r.28-35 s.32b

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Resources and useful websites

This Policy is linked to the following *National Quality Standard*

www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/the-national-quality-standard

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/pages/veyladf.aspx?Redirect=1

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