

Enrolment and Orientation Policy

Aim

To ensure that our enrolment and orientation processes meet the unique needs of each child and family. To ensure there are clear guidelines for staff and educators to support children and families during their transition to the service, to help to develop collaborative partnerships, and promote a sense of belonging to the service community whilst meeting all regulatory requirements.

Background

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations, an approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for managing enrolment and orientation (regulation 168).

Related Policies

This policy is to be read in conjunction with Shoalhaven Family Day Care:

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy
- Management of Medical Conditions in Children Policy
- Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy
- Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Excursions Policy
- Safe Transportation of Children Policy
- Immunisation and Disease Prevention Policy
- Fees and Charges Policy

Method

Shoalhaven Family Day Care Co-ordination Unit will:

- ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations in relation to enrolment and orientation are met.
- ensure children are enrolled correctly and lawfully under Family Assistance Law, regardless of their parent's or guardian's eligibility for Child Care Subsidy.
- ensure that an enrolment record is kept for each child which contains all the prescribed information set out in regulation 160.

The record must include:

- full name, date of birth and address of the child.
- name, address and contact details of:
 - each known parent of the child
 - any emergency contact
 - any authorised nominee
 - any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or administration of medication
 - any person authorised to give permission to the educator to take the child off the premises
 - any person authorised to give permission for the child to be taken outside the premises on an excursion

- any person authorised to give permission for the child to be taken outside the premises on transport provided, or arranged, by the service
 - details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plan.
 - gender of the child
 - language used in the child's home
 - cultural background of the child and their parents
 - any special considerations for the child, such as cultural, dietary or religious requirements or additional needs
 - authorisations for:
 - the approved provider, nominated supervisor or an educator to seek medical treatment and/or ambulance transportation for the child
 - the service to take the child on regular outings
 - regular transportation of the child.
 - name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service
 - Medicare number (if available)
 - details of any specific healthcare needs of the child, including any medical conditions, allergies, or diagnosis that the child is at risk of anaphylaxis
 - any medical management plan, anaphylaxis medical management plan or risk minimisation plan
 - any dietary restrictions.
 - immunisation status and certificates for immunisation or exemption for the child, as required under the *Public Health Act 2010* NSW
 - if the approved provider or a staff member has sighted a child health record, a notation to that effect.
- keep prescribed enrolment and other documents as set out in regulation 177, including a medication record and children's attendance record.
 - keep records confidential and stored safely and securely for the relevant period listed in regulation 183.
 - until the child is aged 25 years: if the record relates to an incident, illness, injury or trauma suffered by a child while being educated and cared for by the service.
 - until the child is aged 25 years: if the record relates to an incident, illness, injury or trauma suffered by a child that may have occurred following an incident while being educated and cared for by the service.
 - for at least 45 years from the date the record was made for incident, injury, trauma and illness records or other records identified as relevant to child safety and wellbeing (including child sexual abuse).
 - until the end of 7 years after the child's death: if the record relates to the death of a child while being educated and cared for by the service or that may have occurred as a result of an incident while being educated and cared for
 - until the end of 3 years after the last date the child was enrolled at the service: for any other record.
 - ensure staff and educators have the appropriate training and resources needed to manage enrolment and orientation effectively so that they promote respectful and supportive relationships with families and maintain good governance and quality management.
 - ensure regular discussions take place with staff and educators to encourage and develop knowledge and confidence around implementing quality

practices relating to enrolment and orientation that align with the National Quality Standard, particularly Quality Area 6.

- ensure procedures relating to family access to the premises are part of induction training, and regularly reviewed at team meetings and during contact visits to educators.
- critically reflect with educators to encourage and develop a further understanding of how to support children and families' individual needs during enrolment and orientation.
- ensure induction training of new educators and staff includes information about enrolment and orientation.
- ensure regular reviews (at a minimum every 18 months) are made of the Enrolment and Orientation Policy to ensure the policy and procedures are informed by current recognised guidelines and up-to-date information.
- take reasonable steps to ensure that educators, staff and volunteers follow the enrolment and orientation policy and procedures.
- conduct audits of child enrolment records kept by educators to ensure compliance with Regulation 160 *Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator*. For example, SFDC coordination unit staff will check at each annual home safety visit that all required child enrolment records are maintained by educators.
- ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to coordinators, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection.
- support families' involvement in the service and contribution to service decisions regarding the enrolment and orientation of their child at the service. Let families know how feedback is valued and what procedures are in place for families to be decision-makers.
- provide information about the service's philosophy, and policy and procedures such as:
 - Acceptance and refusal of authorisations
 - Dealing with medical conditions in children
 - Incident, injury, trauma and illness
 - Delivery and collection of children
- help families, when they enquire about care, to understand the benefits of family day care and the role of the coordination unit.
- discuss any concerns with families they may have about their child commencing at family day care.
- implement procedures for enrolment and orientation:
 - on receiving an enquiry for care, complete details in Harmony.
 - check educator board for any vacancies in that area and determine if a suitable vacancy exists, taking into account any additional family needs such as the language, or cultural needs of the family.
 - if there is a suitable educator in that area who has a vacancy on any of the days requested, then send the parent details to the educator who fits the request and ask the educator to confirm. Coordinators will document notes on the request for care form.
 - send the parent the name and mobile number of each educator that you have referred.

- ask parent and educator to contact the Unit with their outcome/decision of enrolment.
- organise enrolment at request of the educator. An enrolment pack will be sent to families once an enrolment is confirmed by the educator.
- regularly review/update request for care details in Harmony and monitor current vacancies, utilising the details to fill these vacancies promptly. The coordination unit will send regular vacancy alerts to families on the waitlist list looking to commence care. Families will be asked to contact the service where potential vacancies may meet their family's needs.

The coordination unit will serve as a conduit and put families in contact with the relevant educators, while also alerting educators about referrals. Likewise, educators will pass on all self-referrals to the coordination unit to facilitate a smooth enrolment process for potential families.

- ensure families are made aware of all the documents they are required to provide in order to enrol in compliance with the National Law and Regulations.
- ensure families are aware to enrol a child in Shoalhaven Family Day Care they must provide a copy of one or more of the following documents:
 - an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is up to date with their scheduled vaccinations or is fully vaccinated for their age, or
 - an AIR Immunisation History Form on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule (temporary for 6 months only), or
 - an AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form which has been certified by a GP.

No other form of documentation is acceptable (i.e., the former Interim Vaccination Objection Form or Blue Book).

For enrolment purposes an 'up to date' AIR Immunisation History Statement will be determined by the wording "*Up to date*" on the top left-hand side of the AIR Immunisation History Statement.

The due date of the child's next immunisation is recorded in the bottom section of the Statement. NSW Health provide varying amounts of time to allow families to get their child immunised after the specified due date, depending on the disease the vaccination is for. The average is 1 month after the due date.

Shoalhaven Family Day Care will use the wording "*up to date*" on the statement to enrol a child, however if the due date of the next immunisation has passed:

- the statement print out must be current
- the family must provide details of when their child is booked in for their next immunisation
- the family must provide a copy of the updated AIR Immunisation History Statement after the immunisation. This must occur within one week of the immunisation taking place.

Children who have not been immunised due to their parent's vaccine conscientious objection cannot be enrolled into the service.

Exemptions to this immunisation requirement will apply in limited circumstances. The following classes of children can be enrolled without the approved forms however Shoalhaven Family Day Care will direct families to provide the approved forms within 12 weeks from the date of enrolment in the family day care service:

- those who are subject to a guardianship order under section 79A of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
 - those who have been placed in out-of-home care
 - those who are being cared for by an adult who is not the child's parent due to exceptional circumstances such as illness or incapacity
 - those who have been evacuated following a state of emergency (for example, a declared natural disaster)
 - Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children
- ask families to share relevant information, at enrolment, about their child that will support the continuity of care between home and the service.
 - ensure any children enrolling who are identified as having a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition including asthma, diabetes and anaphylaxis are notified to the educator and the parent/guardian of the child has provided a medical management or action plan for the child before starting care. A copy of the medical management or action plan will be kept by the Co-ordination Unit in the child's file and a copy will be forwarded to the educator.
 - ensure educators in consultation with parents/guardians of a child identified as having a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition develop a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan to ensure that the risks relating to the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition are assessed and minimised.
 - ensure a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan, relating to a medical condition is in place before a child commences at the service.
 - speak with families about any relevant parenting situations which might be bound by Court Orders and other formal documents. Such documents may include statements which cover who the child lives with, listing adults who may or may not collect or interact with the child, or state who is responsible for making decisions in relation to the child's education and welfare. Shoalhaven Family Day Care will manage custody related arrangements with respect and in accordance with the legal orders in place. Enrolling family members are responsible for informing the service of custody and access arrangements on enrolment and must advise the service immediately of any subsequent alterations to these arrangements. These documents will be shared with the relevant educators, and a copy will be maintained in the child's enrolment record.
 - ensure families understand the consent to disclose personal information contained in the enrolment form and other child-related documents, and understand that withdrawal of consent may be provided, in writing, at any time after it has been given.
 - prioritise children, where possible, who are at risk of serious abuse or neglect or who are a child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment. Whilst there are no legal requirements for filling vacancies and providers can set their own rules for deciding who receives a place, prioritising these children meets the Australian Government's aims of helping families who are most in need and supporting the safety and wellbeing of children at risk.
 - consider further priority, where appropriate and able, for:
 - Children in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families
 - Children in families, which include a disabled person
 - Children in families on lower incomes
 - Children in families with a non-English speaking background

- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents
- give priority of placement to siblings of children in care with their existing educator. Priority of placement will also be to a child requiring care if a sibling has previously been in care with the educator requested, and it can be demonstrated that there exists a strong relationship between the family and the educator.
- assist where possible if a family requests a transfer from one educator to another, for whatever reason. The coordination unit will endeavour to provide a suitable alternative educator.
- assist where possible to provide back up or alternative care where an educator is required to close their service due to illness or leave requirements. The coordination unit will make all attempts to link families up with a suitable replacement educator, taking into account:
 - previous back up placements arranged for the child
 - developmental stage of the child
 - location of family home and work
 - requests and information provided by family.

A copy of all enrolment details will be provided to the back-up educator – via email and an enrolment booking will be created in Harmony under the back-up educator's details. All relevant medical management plans and court order information will be provided to the back-up educator.

Educators will:

- ensure that an enrolment record is kept for each child which contains all the information set out in regulation 160, as well as authorisations from parents relating to medical treatment, regular outings, health information and transportation.
- use the enrolment checklist provided by the unit as a guide to ensure they have all the required child enrolment documents on file.
- keep prescribed enrolment and other documents as set out in regulation 178, including a medication record and children's attendance record.
- keep records confidential and stored safely and securely for the relevant period listed in regulation 183.
- engage in training and discussion with the coordination unit and external bodies to effectively manage enrolment and orientation, ensuring the promotion of respectful and supportive relationships with families and maintenance of good governance and quality management.
- critically reflect with coordinators to further improve practices for supporting children and families' individual needs during enrolment and orientation.
- encourage families to visit to discuss a potential enrolment.
- ensure first impressions are positive by welcoming families and showing genuine interest and acceptance, answering questions honestly, and taking concerns seriously. Families will be encouraged to share their expectations whilst attending the service.
- share the service approaches to documentation, curriculum planning and play based learning and share information about administrative matters including service operation and fees.

- liaise with the coordination unit to advise if both family and educator decide to proceed with enrolment so arrangements can be made for enrolment packs to be completed and orientation visits to occur.
- encourage families to spend time at the service with the child a few times before leaving the child on their own. Explain the value of orientation visits and encourage families to discuss their preferences for orientation and separation.
- reassure families that they can stay with their child for as long as they choose during orientation and once the child commences.
- tailor orientation for each family as the time needed for settling in will vary for each child and their family.
- use enrolment and orientation as an important opportunity to begin to gather information from the child and their family about each child's knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests which can be incorporated into the program. Give families the opportunity to provide information about their children that will assist educators to get to know them and help them settle into the program.
- ask families what their priorities are for their child's learning and wellbeing.
- discuss any concerns with families they may have about their child commencing at family day care.
- discuss with the family their right to enter the family day care residence or approved venue at any time the child is being educated and cared for by the educator.
- share information with families to support the child's transition into the service. Discuss with families, the activities and experiences that children will engage in and provide an opportunity for the family to ask questions and seek clarification.
- respect the culture, values and beliefs of families, and incorporate their decision-making in their child's learning and wellbeing. Educators will provide opportunities for families to share information that will support the continuity of care between home and the service, such as any special considerations for the child or custodial arrangements, home language, cultural background and family priorities.
- provide the family with suggestions for developing a routine for saying goodbye to their child and support the child and family with the separation process. Reassure the family they can call and speak to the educator or the coordination unit at any time and they will be updated about any changes or circumstances which may affect them or their child.
- offer comfort and reassurance in a way that is suited to the child during separation from their family and share honest information with families about how their child is settling into the service.
- familiarise themselves with the information supplied by the family about the child in the enrolment form and ensure they are aware of any medical conditions and how to manage them if required before the child commences care.
- ensure families have been provided with information about the service's philosophy, and policy and procedures such as:
 - Acceptance and refusal of authorisations
 - Dealing with medical conditions in children

- Incident, injury, trauma and illness
 - Delivery and collection of children
 - Illness of children during care
 - Dealing with infectious diseases
- ensure families of any children enrolling who are identified as having a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition including asthma, diabetes and anaphylaxis have provided a medical management or action plan for the child before starting care.
 - ensure they have, in consultation with parents/guardians of a child identified as having a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition developed a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan to ensure that the risks relating to the child's specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition are assessed and minimised before a child commences at the service.
 - ensure they speak with families about any relevant parenting situations which might be bound by Court Orders and other formal documents. Ensure they have any documents may include statements which cover who the child lives with, listing adults who may or may not collect or interact with the child, or state who is responsible for making decisions in relation to the child's education and welfare on file at the Service. Ensure they speak with families about the consent to disclose personal information to each parent/guardian.
 - encourage families to share information about other child-related services accessed by the family which may assist in creating continuity of care for the child.
 - on the child's first day of attendance, welcome the family and child, ensuring that there is a space ready for the child's belongings. Educators will reassure the family and assist with separation if required.
 - ensure they abide with all relevant Family Assistance Law including the number of relatives in care, which limits the number of children a family day care educator can provide care to, if they are related to the educator. Care to relatives must make up less than 50% of all care provided during a Child Care Subsidy fortnight. Educator's relatives covered by this law includes grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and relatives of a family day care educator's partner (by either de facto or marriage).
 - ensure that if they have their own children in care, as part of the service ratio, they complete an enrolment form. Family Day Care educators cannot receive Child Care Subsidy (CCS) or Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) when caring for close family members. This includes:
 - their own child
 - their partner's child
 - their foster child, adopted child, kinship child or any child they have legal responsibility for, or
 - their brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, stepbrother or stepsister.

They must, however complete an enrolment form for these children if they are educated and cared for by the educator as part of the family day care service.

- ensure they have all required enrolment documents for a child on file at the service before the child commences care, including enrolment form, immunisation history statement, medical records etc.
- ensure children in care and their families are introduced to the educator's family and/or household members.

- if taking leave, inform families of their service closure with as much notice as possible. Educators will also inform the coordination unit that their service will be closed with as much notice as possible. Educators will ask families to complete a back-up care request form and will forward this to the coordination unit with as much notice as possible, prior to leave commencing so the unit can ensure all enrolment processes are followed in line with regulatory requirements and all enrolment information is passed on to the back-up educator (preference is a minimum of 2 weeks' notice). Educators will create a new holiday period request in Harmony to cancel the sessions for the period they are on leave.
- ensure they have all required enrolment details and documents for any children they are providing back-up care to. Educators will inform the parents/guardians of their fee schedule for any back-up care they are providing and of any details unique to their service which the family ought to be aware of, such as any food allergies within the service.

Families will:

- complete all documentation required by the service. Ensure enrolment forms are completed in full and signed where required.
- provide any required authorisations, such as for the approved provider, nominated supervisor 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.
- ensure all information about the child and family held by the service is kept up to date.
- provide the following at enrolment:
 - completed enrolment form including authorisations and consents
 - current 'up to date' immunisation history statement (see definition of 'up to date' statement above, and also refer to *Immunisation and Disease Prevention Policy*)
 - birth certificate, passport or other identification
 - proof of address
 - current contact information for parents/guardians and emergency contacts, including email addresses
 - CRNs for parents and child
 - information on children's additional needs including medical conditions, health and developmental concerns, medical plans and information from support agencies
 - relevant court orders
- speak with the Service about any relevant parenting situations which might be bound by Court Orders and other formal documents. Enrolling family members are responsible for informing the service of custody and access arrangements on enrolment and must advise the service immediately of any subsequent alterations to these arrangements.
- attend the service to participate in orientation visits. Family members must remain with their child during orientation visits, as they have not formally commenced care.
- provide the service with any information about their child that may assist educators to get to know them and help them settle into the program.

- share information about other child-related services accessed by the family which may assist in creating continuity of care for the child.
- read the parent handbook and policies supplied and understand the requirements, particularly in relation to illness of children and management of medical conditions.
- 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 including details of any dietary restrictions for the child related to allergies or medical condition.
- complete required medical action plans for allergies, anaphylaxis, asthma or medical conditions in consultation with a medical practitioner and return these to the Service before enrolment commences.
- collaborate with the family day care educator to develop a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan for their child that outlines possible triggers (risks) and strategies to reduce their child's possible exposure for any allergies, anaphylaxis, asthma or medical conditions.
- agree to conditions of enrolment as outlined in the childcare agreement provided, including payment of weekly fees and notification of withdrawal or changes to attendance.
- if requesting back-up or alternative care due to educator leave and service closure, complete and sign a back-up care request form. If, after signing this form, the back-up care is no longer required, families will contact the back-up educator to cancel care with at least 24 hours' notice. Families will be required to pay the back-up educator unless care is cancelled with at least 24 hours' notice.
- if using any back-up care, inform the back-up educator about any specific health care needs of their child including medical conditions, allergies, dietary restrictions etc.

Legislation Requirement:	Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Education and Care Services National Regulations National Quality Standards
Resources:	Quality Area 6 Enrolment & Orientation Family Day Care – ACECQA factsheet Child Care Provider Handbook Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit CELA ACECQA Enrolment and Orientation FDC Record Keeping, ACECQA

Amend 13 – 12/10/2023
Reviewed and Updated October 2023
To be reviewed on or before: April 2025

Child Enrolment (Additional Children) Checklist for Educators

This checklist is only to be used by Educators when adding a child for families with another child who is currently registered and has an active enrolment with Shoalhaven Family Day Care.

The following documentation is to be returned to the Co-ordination Unit at least two working days prior to the child commencing care. Educator to keep copy for their records and legislative purposes.

- Enrolment form fully completed and signed
- Current Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) History Statement, AIR History Form or AIR Medical Exemption Form
- Birth certificate or other identification
- A copy of any court order relevant to the child
- Regular Excursion Authorisation and Transportation Authorisation
- Any forms required by policy relating to additional needs including medical conditions
- Updated Childcare Agreement
- SFDC Social Media and Publicity Permission Form
- Advise family of FDC enrolment fee for additional child/children – Refer to current Fees and Charges (SFDC will invoice family for this payment).

In addition, the Educator shall obtain and retain the following for each child:

- Family/child information form
- Signed fee schedule (per family)
- Copies of Enrolment form, immunisation, updated Childcare Agreement, Authorisation forms and SFDC & Educator Social Media Forms

Families are to:

- Contact the Family Assistance Office on Ph: 136 150 to advise their child is commencing with Shoalhaven Family Day Care

Educator Name:

Enrolling Parent/Guardian Name:

Childs Name:

Expected Start Date:

Enrolment submitted to the Co-ordination Unit: (date)

Office Use Only

- Ratios Confirmed (date)
- Documentation received (date) Email / original (please circle)
- Input on Harmony (date) Enrolment confirmation sent
(date).....
- Enrolment confirmed with Educator (date)