

1. SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

1) BACKGROUND

Family centred practice, compliance and customer service are at the heart of the enrolment and orientation of all children into Fairfield Council’s Best Start Education and Care Services. The process of enrolling children is an administrative intake process managed by the Business Development and Support Team to ensure compliance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations and Family Assistance legislation. A child’s orientation into their new service is supported by educators at the service.

1.1 PURPOSE

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. We aim to ensure that our 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 service community. Orientation is an important opportunity to develop meaningful, respectful and supportive relationships with families. Having a smooth transition supports quality outcomes for children in the service and forms the basis of ongoing communication and trust between families and educators. Having a seamless experience in the enrolment phase also instils confidence in families and assists them in understanding the ongoing administrative requirements of their child’s enrolment and their obligation as fee-paying customers of Fairfield City Council.

1.2 SCOPE

In recognising that enrolment and orientation have different legislative requirements and serve different purposes, this policy explains the processes and outcomes for stakeholders prior to formal commencement at one of Council’s early education and care services.

1.3 DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
Enrolment	An enrolment occurs when the Fairfield City Council Best Start Education and Care has an arrangement with an individual or organisation to provide education and care to a child.
Enrolment record	Fairfield City Council Best Start Education and Care will ensure that an enrolment record is kept for each individual child enrolled at the service, and the family day care (FDC) educator must keep an enrolment record for each child they educate and care for. The record must include, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full name, date of birth and address of the child. • The name, address and contact details of • each known parent of the child • any emergency contacts • 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 authorise the education and care service to transport the child or arrange transportation of the child.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>Authorisations for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • If the approved provider or a staff member has sighted a child health record, a notation to that effect.
Orientation	Process to support the child's transition to the service, whereby families/carers 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.
FDC educators	Educators register with Fairfield City Council as FDC providers
Families/Carers	Families and Carers customers at Best Start Education and Care Services

1.4 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

This policy has been implemented to ensure compliance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations, National Law, Family Assistance legislation and the National Quality Standards (NQS).

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Regulation 85 Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
Regulation 86 Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
Regulation 88 Infectious diseases
Regulation 90 Medical conditions policy
Regulation 91 Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
Regulation 92 Medication record
Regulation 99 Children leaving the education and care service premises
Regulation 102 Authorisation for excursions
Regulation 102D Authorisation for service to transport children
Regulation 157 Access for parents
Regulation 160 Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
Regulation 161 Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
Regulation 162 Health information to be kept in enrolment record
Regulation 168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 169 Additional policies and procedures – family day care service
Regulation 170 Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171 Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172 Notification of change to policies or procedures
Regulation 177 Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
Regulation 178 Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by family day care educator
Regulation 179 Family Day Care educator to provide documents on leaving service
Regulation 181 Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
Regulation 182 Confidentiality of records kept by family day care educator
Regulation 183 Storage of records and other documents
Education and Care Services National Law
Section 175 Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents
Section 295 False or misleading information or documents
Family Assistance Law
A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
Family Assistance Legislation (Jobs for Families Package) Act 2017

National Quality Standards	
Element 6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
Element 6.1.2	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child’s learning and wellbeing.
Element 6.1.3	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family Well-being.
Element 6.2.2	Access and Participation
Element 7.1.2	Management Systems
Element 7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.

1.5 STAKEHOLDERS

Key stakeholders who will engage with this policy include the Children and Family Services Manager, Coordinators, Business Development and Support Team, Nominated Supervisors

(Centre Directors) and designated Responsible Persons, relevant centre staff And stakeholders encompassing Family Members and their Child/ren, Community Professionals and support agencies.

SECTION 2 - POLICY

2.1 OBJECTIVE AND GOALS

- To ensure the intake and enrolment of children are done so in a timely manner, ensuring maximum occupancy at services
- To ensure all legislative requirements are met
- To ensure the intake of children into Fairfield City Council Children and Family Services Early Education and Care Services is done so in a consistent manner with family centred customer focused approach
- To ensure all children and families who commence at one of Council's Early Education and Care Services engage in an orientation process that assures the individual needs of their child will be met throughout the duration of their enrolment

2.2 POLICY STATEMENT

APPLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION

The intake of all children into Council's early education and care services has two phases, those being:

1. **Intake/enrolment of children**, which is supported by the Intake Process, and managed by the Children and Family Services Business Development and Support Team (BDS) manage the intake of all children from the time they join the centralised waiting list through to the time they are enrolled at a service.

When a vacancy at a service has been identified, the BDST accesses the centralised waitlist to source the child who is next on the list for placement. Where possible, intake and enrolment is done online.

An enrolment cannot be confirmed until the online record of enrolment information is complete in full, including **ALL** required additional documentation is attached and conditions of enrolment accepted by the child's parent/primary carer.

Were families do not have the ability to complete the online record of enrolment, a hard copy document will be offered and/or support to understand and enter the required information and attachment documents. All enrolments are subject to the Terms and Conditions outlined in the service handbook (updated annually).

1.1 Additional Documentation

For the purpose of complying with the requirements of the National Law and Regulations additional documentation is required to support the authenticity of child's individual enrolment record including, but are not limited to;

- The individual child's original Birth Certificate. Where a birth certificate is not available, alternate forms of identification such as a Passport or Government official letter stating the

child's full name, date of birth, gender of the child and each known parent of the child. A copy of this document(s) will be held on the child's enrolment record.

Where children's families/guardians do not want a copy of the document to be held on the child's individual enrolment record, it is required by the Nominated Supervisor of the enrolling service to sight the document and required information. The information will be documented on a [Statutory Declaration](#), the Nominated Supervisor and a witness will be required to sign the Statutory Declaration.

- Court orders relating to the child's residence or the child's contact with a parent or other person. A copy will be attached to the child's enrolment record. It is the responsibility of the child's family or legal guardian to update these records timely and inform the service of any legal changes.
- The child's individual Immunisation status such as an up-to-date Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement (for a child that is up to date or can't be immunised for medical reasons) OR an AIR Immunisation History Form (for a child on a catch-up schedule) must be provided.

The Priority of Access Guidelines for preschool enrolment:

- Children at risk.
- Children currently not receiving other early education and care services.
- Children age two years before school (start strong requirements)
- Children with additional needs.

Preschool enrolments are available for two or three days of care per week per child this supports enrolment of at least 600 hours per year or 15 hours per week. Any children who require four or more days of care per week will only be eligible for Long Day Care Services.

Long Day Care and FDC enrolment priority of access:

- Children at risk.
- Children with one or more parents/ guardians who work/study
- Children with additional needs.
- Where an FDC Educator or Early Learning centre has no vacant places and is providing childcare for a child who is a priority 3 under the Priority of Access Guidelines, the coordination unit may require that child to vacate the position or change days in order for the Educator to provide a place for a higher priority child. *At least 2 weeks' notice will be provided in writing to families required to vacate a position or change their days.*

As FDC educators are self-employed, fee payment arrangements from other support agencies must be made in writing prior to children enrolling, this will include a security deposit of 2 weeks fees prior to children commencing care

A withdrawal of a child from a service requires the primary parent or guardian to provide thirty days' notice, excluding shut down periods, two weeks' notice for a FDC educator. Notice of withdrawals need to be made by filling in a Withdrawal of Enrolment Request.

2. Child and Family Enrolment and Orientation Visit LDC AND PS

The Enrolment and Orientation visit is managed by the Centre Director of the service, and commences once a child's enrolment at a service has been processed and is confirmed by the BDST.

To support the child's transition to the service, families/carers will be offered to spend time at the service with their child a few times before commencing care. The time required for orientation and

settling in will vary for children and their family, so it is important to be flexible and individualise orientation for each family.

During the orientation process, families/caregivers must review and sign the hard copy of their child's completed enrolment record and provide the child's original source of identification for verification. The Centre Director will discuss and complete the [Enrolment Interview Checklist](#) and [Service Level Agreement](#) with the child's family/carer(s) during the Enrolment and Orientation visit ensure compliance of the information required within the Enrolment Record as well as to discuss the specific needs of the child and family. Please refer to the [Orientation procedure](#).

*** Note: Families are to be aware that during these visits they must remain in the service with their child as the child/children participating in the orientation process are not part of the service ratio at that time.

FDC - Child and Family Orientation

Orientation

All families enrolling will have the opportunity to be involved in an orientation process to assist in the transition into care. For each family, the orientation process may differ according to their individual needs and requests.

Families complete an enrolment interview, which is carried out with a team member from the coordination unit. This interview must be completed before a child can commence care.

It is important to remember that as Family Day Care educators, even if the service has obtained the information in the enrolment record, FDC Educators have a legal responsibility to make sure that information is as correct.

Orientation visits are made at a mutually convenient time for both the FDC Educator and family

*** Note: Families are to be aware that during these visits, they must remain in the service with their child as the child/children participating in the orientation process are not part of the service ratio at that time.

During orientation visits:

Educators will introduce the child to the other children attending the service, taking into account the response from each individual child so as not to overwhelm them.

Educators will provide families with any additional information they request or would like to clarify during their enrolment interview/visit and the orientation sessions.

Educators will support the child's transition into the routine of the service by;

Seeking clarification from the family in relation to the child's personal information.

Following the child's individual routine and incorporating it into the service routine as much as possible

Providing the level of physical comfort and affection the child requires and is comfortable with

Explaining the day's routine before and as it's occurring

Encouraging existing children to play with and help the 'new child' (depending on the age of the children)

FDC - Temporary Relocation

The FDC educator or the coordination unit can arrange Temporary Relocation. If arranged by the FDC educator, the coordinating unit must be notified so arrangements can be made to transfer information to the new educator. E.g medical conditions

For further information on the temporary relocation of children, please refer to QMF-FDC-091 Temporary Relocation policy.

3. Maintaining Up to date Enrolment Records

It is the responsibility of the child’s family/primary career to offer up to date enrolment records and information throughout the child’s enrolment at the services; this includes, but is not limited to, the information outlined within the definition of **Enrolment Record** above. Information updates need to be offered by completing the

Where updated information is

SECTION 3 - GOVERNANCE

3.1 RELATED POLICIES/PROCEDURES/FORMS

Document Number	Waitlist Application EForm QMF-CS-028 Child Enrolment Form QMF-CS-027 Enrolment Interview Checklist QMF-CS-028 Service Level Agreement Childcare and pre-school entry & immunisation
------------------------	--

3.2 RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner	Children and Family Services
---------------------	------------------------------

3.3 RISK

Failing administrative intake process and compliance requirements
 Customer complaints
 Poor customer service

3.4 VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
5	August 2015	Children and Family Services Manager	Updated terminology
6	August 2019	Children and Family Services Manager	Updated to reflect new process of separating enrolment and orientation. Updated legislative references.
7	July 2020	Children and Family Services Manager	Merging FDC
8	July 2022	Children and Family Services Manager	Updated to reflect new process of enrolment and orientation. Updated legislative references.
9	November 2022	Children and Family Services Manager	Updated Law, Regulations, definitions added

3.5 REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or when a change to governing legislation occurs, whichever occurs sooner.

3.6 AUTHORISATION

This policy has been authorised by the Manager, Children and Family Services.