

CHILD-SER-POL-06

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The initial experiences a child and their family have at an Early Childhood Centre are critical and lay the foundation for the child's learning and wellbeing throughout the course of their time at the Centre. Northside Community Service Ltd (Northside) is committed to providing a framework for enrolment and orientation that gives each child and their family the most supportive and consistent experience possible.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of the Enrolment and Orientation Policy is to outline Northside's responsibilities under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* for enrolment and orientation, to ensure that all children and their families are supported to have a smooth transition into a Northside Early Childhood Centre.

3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all parents or guardians who wish to access a Northside Early Childhood Centre.
- 3.2. This policy applies to Nominated Supervisors, Educators, and those employed to work in a Northside Early Childhood Centre.

4. Review Requirements

- 4.1. The policy is to be reviewed annually.

5. Policy Statements

5.1. Early Childhood Centre Tour

- 5.1.1. Before a family is offered a place for their child at a Northside Early Childhood Centre, they are required to have a tour of the Centre with the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person on Duty. For more details on what information will be communicated to families on a Centre tour, please see the **Enrolment and Orientation Procedure**.

5.2. Early Childhood Centre Orientation

- 5.2.1. Each child must have a minimum of 1 orientation visit to the Centre before the formal commencement of their enrolment. This is an opportunity for the child and their family to become familiar with the learning environments and educators, and to ask any questions they may have about the Centre.
- 5.2.2. The child's family are required to stay on the Centre premises for the duration of their child's orientation session as the child is not yet formally enrolled at the Centre.
- 5.2.3. The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that the team of educators are prepared to provide a thorough orientation for that child and their family. For more information outlining what

Document Type: Policy	Doc Ref No.: CHILD-SER-POL-06	Distribution: Children's services
Version No.: V1	Effective Date: 11/5/2023	Northside Community Service

CHILD-SER-POL-06

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

information will be communicated to families during an orientation visit, please see the **Enrolment and Orientation Procedure**.

5.3. Enrolment Process

- 5.3.1. Northside's Enrolments Team, in collaboration with the Centre, will ensure that the enrolment process for families is clear and consistent, through:
- 5.3.1.1. Providing families with a copy of Northside documents, including the **Northside Orientation Guide, Fee and Enrolment Guide, and Our Approach to Early Childhood Education**;
 - 5.3.1.2. Explaining the Federal Government's Child Care Subsidy (CCS) to families and how it relates to their enrolment, including referring families to the Family Assistance Office;
 - 5.3.1.3. Managing the waitlist for all Centres in accordance with the Priority of Access Guidelines. For more information, please refer to the **Enrolment and Orientation Procedure**; and
 - 5.3.1.4. Providing families with access to Northside's policies and procedures. Any changes in policies and procedures will be notified to families via email.
- 5.3.2. Northside will ensure that all enrolment documents will be stored securely by Northside to ensure that confidentiality is upheld. For more information about the storage of documents at Northside, please refer to the **Governance Policy**.
- 5.3.3. Families will be notified of Northside's approach to ensuring families have access to their child's Early Childhood Centre whilst they are in attendance, via the information outlined in the **Authorisations Policy**.

5.4. Enrolment Record

Document Type: Policy	Doc Ref No.: CHILD-SER-POL-06	Distribution: Children's services
Version No.: V1	Effective Date: 11/5/2023	Northside Community Service

CHILD-SER-POL-06

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

- 5.4.1. The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* prescribe certain information that families must provide to their child's Early Childhood Centre. For more information regarding what prescribed information is required, please refer to the **Enrolment and Orientation Procedure Section 5.4.**
- 5.4.2. Families are required to give consent for Northside to store documentation for and information about their child on Northside premises.
- 5.4.3. This information will be provided by families prior to the commencement of their child's enrolment and the child's enrolment record will be stored securely to maintain privacy and confidentiality.

5.5. Priority of Access Guidelines

- 5.5.1. Decisions regarding the allocation of spaces in Northside Early Childhood Centres will be made in accordance with Northside's Priority of Access Guidelines. For more information about the Priority of Access Guidelines, please refer to the **Enrolment and Orientation Procedure.**

5.6. Code of Conduct

- 5.6.1. All families are to sign the **Code of Conduct** for enrolment to proceed.
- 5.6.2. A copy of the signed Code of Conduct is to be maintained in the child's enrolment record.

5.7 Enrolments Outside the CCS System

- 5.7.1 Northside partners with the ACT Government to support fee-free enrolments for children under specific funded programs. These are:
- 5.7.1.1 Yurauna Early Childhood Centre
 - 5.7.1.2 The Children's Services Program

Document Type: Policy	Doc Ref No.: CHILD-SER-POL-06	Distribution: Children's services
Version No.: V1	Effective Date: 11/5/2023	Northside Community Service

5.7.1.3 The Three-Year-Old Preschool Initiative

5.7.2 Enrolments under these programs do not require CCS information to be provided by families (such as Customer Reference Numbers).

5.7.3 While every effort should be made to follow the orientation requirements of this Policy, Northside understands that due to the complex and urgent nature of many enrolments in these programs, it may not always be possible. Northside will work closely with the child, family, and case worker to ensure the child is given as much support as possible to enrol in a Centre.

6. Breaches and Penalties

6.1. Breaches

6.1.1. Breaches of this policy must be reported immediately to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or nominee. Confidentiality will be maintained where appropriate.

6.2. Penalties

6.2.1. If Northside believes that unethical or illegal activities inconsistent with Northside's purpose or mission have occurred, these processes will be followed:

6.2.1.1. An investigation will take place to determine potential breaches.

6.2.1.2. Where an employee has breached this Policy, and the offence is judged to be serious, the procedures outlined in the Northside **Grievance Policy** will be followed.

6.2.1.3. Where a breach involves illegal activities, Northside has an obligation to report these to the relevant external law enforcement agencies, and individuals may be subject to prosecution.

7. Audits

Document Type: Policy	Doc Ref No.: CHILD-SER-POL-06	Distribution: Children's services
Version No.: V1	Effective Date: 11/5/2023	Northside Community Service

- 7.1. Areas of procurement will be subject to ongoing assurance and audit. All records belong to Northside. In most cases, these are admissible as evidence and are subject to relevant Territory and Federal laws.
- 7.2. The Director of Compliance and Quality is responsible for the development of the audit plan overseeing all areas of procurement. This plan is to include details of what is to be reviewed in each audit and the audit schedule.
- 7.3. The Director of Compliance and Quality is to provide a report to the CEO in relation to the results of audits undertaken during the period.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1. Roles and responsibilities for the Enrolment and Orientation Policy are detailed below:

8.1.1. The Approved Provider (Northside) is responsible for:

- 8.1.1.1. Providing governance oversight of the orientation and enrolment process.
- 8.1.1.2. Ensuring policies and procedures are subject to regular review.

8.1.2. Northside's Enrolments Team are responsible for:

- 8.1.2.1. Ensuring that all prescribed information and documentation required by the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* is collected for each child, and that this information and documentation is provided to the Nominated Supervisor.
- 8.1.2.2. Ensuring that all enrolment and orientation practices comply with this Policy; and
- 8.1.2.3. Ensuring a consistent, open, and fair enrolment and orientation process.

8.1.3. Nominated Supervisors are responsible for:

- 8.1.3.1. Ensuring all educators are aware of this Policy in relation to their work at Northside;
- 8.1.3.2. Ensuring that all enrolment and orientation practices comply with this Policy;

Document Type: Policy	Doc Ref No.: CHILD-SER-POL-06	Distribution: Children's services
Version No.: V1	Effective Date: 11/5/2023	Northside Community Service

CHILD-SER-POL-06

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

- 8.1.3.3. Ensuring a consistent, open, and fair enrolment and orientation process;
- 8.1.3.4. Ensuring that all prescribed information and documentation required by the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* is kept on premises in a secure location, where staff can access when necessary;
- 8.1.3.5. Explaining all relevant policies to families upon enrolment
- 8.1.3.6. Providing guidance to educators on orientation process.
- 8.1.3.7. Ensuring all educators, employees & families are notified of any changes to policies & procedures.
- 8.1.3.8. Ensuring policies and procedures are kept available and accessible.
- 8.1.3.9. Ensuring educators and employees follow policies and procedures.

8.1.4. **Educators are responsible for:**

- 8.1.4.1. Following policies and procedures;
- 8.1.4.2. Assisting the Centre Director with the orientation process for new children and families;
- 8.1.4.3. Maintaining professional and ethical interactions with families on Centre tours and during orientation; and
- 8.1.4.4. Creating a welcoming and respectful environment during Centre tours and orientation;

9. Associated Documents

9.1. Associated Northside Documents

- 9.1.1. **Grievance Policy**
- 9.1.2. **Authorisations Policy**
- 9.1.3. **Enrolment and Orientation Procedure**
- 9.1.4. **Fees and Enrolment Guide**
- 9.1.5. **Our Approach to Early Childhood Education**
- 9.1.6. **Code of Conduct**

9.2. Additional Associated Documents

Document Type: Policy	Doc Ref No.: CHILD-SER-POL-06	Distribution: Children's services
Version No.: V1	Effective Date: 11/5/2023	Northside Community Service

9.2.1. [Child care provider handbook](#)

9.2.2. [ACECQA – Enrolment and orientation information sheet](#)

10. Definitions

- 10.1. **Northside-** Northside Community Service, including all programs operated by the organisation.
- 10.2. **Employee-** means the employees of Northside, and contractors, sub-contractors and consultants employed by Northside, apprentices or trainees, students gaining work experience, and volunteers, whilst they are on Northside property or engaged on Northside business.
- 10.3. **Nominated Supervisor-** The qualified staff member (usually the Centre Director) who has been legally appointed with relevant documentation as the Nominated Supervisor of a particular Centre.
- 10.4. **Responsible Person on Duty-** The person in charge of the service when the Nominated Supervisor is absent and marked as such on the Responsible Person Record.
- 10.5. **Educator-** Early Childhood Practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings.
- 10.6. **Enrolment-** An enrolment occurs when the provider has an arrangement with an individual or organisation to provide education and care to a child.
- 10.7. **Orientation-** Process to support the child's transition to the service, whereby families 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.
- 10.8. **ACECQA – Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority-** The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.
- 10.9. **CECA: Children's Education and Care Assurance-** The regulatory authority in the ACT that undertakes investigation, compliance, enforcement, and assessment and rating functions against the National Quality Standard.


11. Document Control and Version History

Document Type: Policy	Doc Ref No.: CHILD-SER-POL-06	Distribution: Children's services
Version No.: V1	Effective Date: 11/5/2023	Northside Community Service

CHILD-SER-POL-06

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

11.1. Document Control

Document Reference:	Enrolment and Orientation Policy
Status:	Approved
Approval Authority:	Anna Whitty – Chief Executive Officer
Signature of Approval Authority:	
Approval Date:	11/5/2023
Effective Date:	11/5/2023
Review Date:	11/5/2024
Functional Unit:	Children's Services
Enquiries Contact:	Name: Anna Whitty Position: Chief Executive Officer Phone: 02 6171 8000 Email: anna.whitty@northside.asn.au

11.2. Version History

Revision Date	Version No.	Brief reason for change	Reference Sections

Document Type: Policy	Doc Ref No.: CHILD-SER-POL-06	Distribution: Children's services
Version No.: V1	Effective Date: 11/5/2023	Northside Community Service