



BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

POLICY NAME: FAMILY PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

POLICY STATEMENT

Family participation is an important part of making the service a true part of the community. We believe in creating an environment that is welcoming and inclusive and supports a sense of belonging for children, families, and educators. We strive to provide open communication and believe in offering an 'open-door policy' by welcoming families to visit the service at any point throughout the day.

BACKGROUND

We aim to ensure open communication through the enrolment and orientation process, policy and statement of philosophy review, daily program, documentation, formal and informal meetings, emails, and conversations. We believe families are a child's first educators and therefore we embrace parents/guardians and other family members involvement within our service. Participation by parents/guardians and other family members conveys a positive impression to children and enables them to feel supported and that a sense of belonging and well-being is promoted.

OVERALL STRATEGIES / HOW WILL IT BE DONE?

We acknowledge the primary and critical influence families have in their children's lives and understand that effective relationships between educators and families are fundamental to achieve quality outcomes for children. Community partnerships that focus on active communication, consultation, and collaboration also contribute to children's learning and wellbeing. Positive relationships with families help to build collaborative partnerships, as together we share a common objective and responsibility for reaching quality outcomes and goals for children. We will provide regular information about the service and ongoing opportunities for families to contribute to our curriculum.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

To ensure the best care for children and families, we operate with an open-door policy, where families are welcome to visit our service and participate in our program at any time during operating hours. We acknowledge that families provide a wealth of valuable information and understanding about their child, and we foster strong, respectful partnerships between our educators and families. We encourage families to join in on our learning activities and celebrate events and special-days with us. Some examples of family events include; Easter Hat Parades, Mothers Day and Fathers Day activities and Graduation ceremonies, all of which are communicated to families through flyers, Facebook, and Xplor app. We recognise that time is valuable to all families, which is why we accommodate many forms of participation and contribution.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE APPROVED PROVIDER AND NOMINATED SUPERVISORS WILL:

- Ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure educators (including casual staff) receive information and induction training to fulfil their roles effectively, including being made aware of the Family Participation and Communication Policy, their responsibilities in implementing it, and any changes that are made over time.
- Ensure students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy.
- Ensure information communicated with families is reliable and accurate, especially if it involves the health and safety of children, employees and visitors to the service.
- Ensure parents/guardians are provided with access to the parent Handbook during the enrolment and orientation process.
- Ensure families are able to view and are encouraged to contribute to the educational program.
- Ensure families are able to view and are encouraged to contribute to the service menu.
- Ensure families are notified of any incident, injury, trauma, or illness as per the Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy.
- Respect, confidentiality and sensitivity are key elements of effective communication with families.
- Ensure processes are in place to communicate with families for whom literacy is an issue, or for whom English is not a first language.
- Ensure families are informed about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints.
- Prioritise children's safety and provide a child safe environment.
- Ensure families always feel welcome to attend the service at any time.
- Provide a flexible approach to work with the families to accommodate any involvement within the service.



BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

POLICY NAME: FAMILY PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Communicate with families in a positive and supportive manner that encourages respectful and trusting relationships.
- Be available for families on arrival and pick up to communicate about their child's day through informal discussions.
- Share insights and perspectives about each child with families.
- Acknowledge the diversity of families and their aspirations for their children.
- Encourage families to be involved in the curriculum by; providing feedback, visiting the service, bringing in items from the home environment, and giving feedback on children's emerging interests and developmental concerns.
- Create a welcoming and safe environment where children and families are respected regardless of background, ethnicity, languages spoken, religion, family makeup or gender.
- Encourage ongoing open and direct two-way communication with families to develop trust and a collaborative relationship.
- Encourage families to discuss any changes that have occurred in the child's life, for example, changes in family circumstances, moving to a new house, death of a family member or friend in order for educators to best support all children through difficult times.

FAMILIES WILL:

- Provide accurate information during the enrolment process about their child including related medical and health information.
- Notify educators when any information related to the education and care of their child changes (medical management plans, court orders-parental orders, authorised nominee).
- Model appropriate behaviour and suitable conduct when interacting with children and staff.
- Communicate any concerns or grievances in accordance with the Complaints Handling Policy, acknowledging sensitive issues should not be discussed in front of children or other staff.
- Acknowledge inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated towards children or staff.
- Be able to visit the service at any time, ensuring that they sign in and out as a visitor on arrival and departure.
- Be able to participate in our program by sharing their skills with the children. This may include playing an instrument, telling a story, sharing cultural traditions, cooking experiences etc.
- Be encouraged to share feedback, ideas and thoughts about the service including policies and procedures.
- Be encouraged to attend children's excursions to help meet required ratios and support their children's knowledge of and engagement in their community.
- Be invited to review the Service's policies and routines.
- Remain informed about what is happening within the service through discussions, flyers, social media etc.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our Family Participation and Communication Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators, and management.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Standard 1	Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture
Standard 3	Families and communities are informed and involved
Standard 4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
Standard 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

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 the 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.



BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

POLICY NAME: FAMILY PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

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.
6.2.1	Transitions	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.
6.2.3	Community and engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS AND NATIONAL LAW

84	Awareness of child protection law
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
111	Administrative space
157	Access for parents
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
161	Authorisation to be kept in enrolment record
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures must be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies and procedures
181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider.

STATUTORY LEGISLATION & CONSIDERATIONS

[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 \(Amended 2023\)](#)

[Education and Care Services National Regulations \(Amended 2023\)](#)

SOURCES

Acknowledgement to Community Early Learning Australia and Childcare Centre Desktop.
 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2014).
 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2018). [Building Partnerships with Families](#).
 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).
 Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0, 2022](#).
 Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
 Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017). (Amended 2023).
 Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (Amended 2023).
 Raising Children Network Australia. (2006-2019). Effective communication with parents: professionals
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/for-professionals/working-with-parents/communicating-with-parents/communication-with-parents>.
 Revised National Quality Standard. (Amended 2023).
 Yorganop Indigenous Professional Support Unit A Welcoming Yarn Engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and their Families in Education and Care Settings. (2024). <https://childaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/A-Welcoming-Yarn-2016-Final.pdf>.

RELATED POLICIES

- Code of Conduct Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Educational Program Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Promoting a Child Safe Environment Policy



BOURKE AND DISTRICT CHILDREN'S SERVICES

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

POLICY NAME: FAMILY PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Parent Handbook

POLICY AUTHORISED BY	Prue Ritchie	POLICY REVIEWED	August 2024
NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2025		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New policy format • Child Safe Standards added • Regulation amendments incorporated 		
PREVIOUS REVIEW			
POLICY AUTHORISED BY	Prue Ritchie	DATE	January 2021