

# Enrolment and Orientation Policy



<b>Document Title</b>	NQS6.40 Enrolment and Orientation Policy	<b>Version</b>	4
<b>Date Approved</b>	September 2024	<b>Date for Review</b>	September 2027
<b>Warning - Ensure you are using the latest version of this policy.</b>			
DCC Network/All Organisation Information/DCC Policies/Quality Area 6 – Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities			

## 1. Policy Statement

River Region Early Education has a commitment to making sure that 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. This includes ensuring that enrolment information contributes to the health, safety, and wellbeing of children, allows the incorporation of children's individual interests and outcomes in the educational program, and meets regulatory requirements, including in relation to confidentiality and storage.

## 2. Rationale

Education and Care Services National Regulations require Approved Providers to collect, record and retain certain information in children's enrolment and attendance records, and to have policies and procedures in relation to enrolment and orientation and for these policies and procedures to be followed, kept available, and for families to be notified of changes. This policy provides guidance for employees and families as to conditions of enrolment, waiting lists and priority of access, casual bookings, cancellation of enrolment, enrolment and attendance records, and the expectations and procedures around the orientation of children into and between services.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers, including students and trainees and Board members.

## 4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board as Approved Provider to ensure that:

- An enrolment record is kept for each child which contains all the information set out in regulation, as well as authorisations from parents relating to medical treatment, regular outings, health information and transportation,
- Prescribed enrolment and other documents are kept as set out in regulation, including a medication record and children's attendance record,
- Records are kept confidential, and stored safely and securely for the relevant period listed in regulation,
- Quality practice guides enrolment and orientation,
- Any changes to priority of access eligibility are approved and are in line with organisational purpose and values and compliant with any legislative, regulatory, or contractual requirements,

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- Copies of this policy and procedures are readily accessible to employees and volunteers, and are available for inspection by families,
- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that employees and volunteers understand their responsibilities and follow the requirements of the policy and procedures, and
- Families are notified at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or significantly impact the service's education and care of children or significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.

It is the responsibility of the General Manager to:

- Carry out or delegate the responsibilities of the Board as detailed above.

It is the responsibility of the Business Services Manager to:

- Support Administration employees to confidentially record children's information in their enrolment record and to ensure records meet regulatory requirements and are kept up to date.

It is the responsibility of the Quality Coordinator to:

- Monitor the completion of any evaluations related to enrolment or orientation and notify the relevant Nominated Supervisor.

It is the responsibility of the Administration team to:

- Support the enrolment process for new and existing enrolments and ensure families receive required application, enrolment and information documentation,
- Maintain any wait list and offer places in line with priority of access guidelines,
- Contact the family of each child on a wait list at least every six months to confirm if the place is still required,
- Regularly check the immunisation status of each enrolled child and ensure that they remain fully immunised in line with the NSW Immunisation Schedule,
- Ensure all required documentation is received for each child on enrolment and is securely recorded in the child's enrolment record,
- Update information in the child's enrolment record when notified by families or Nominated Supervisors,
- Contact families when required documentation must be updated or replaced and ensure documentation is received and recorded in the child's enrolment record,
- Notify the relevant Nominated Supervisor where a family requests a service tour, and
- When a family requests to cancel their enrolment, provide them with the opportunity to give feedback on their reason for withdrawing their child.

It is the responsibility of Nominated Supervisors to:

- Ensure that families who request a service tour are given the opportunity,
- Ensure that families have the opportunity to attend an individual or group orientation before their child attends a service and that the orientation contains the elements identified in this policy,
- Ensure that families receive copies of, or access to, relevant policies and procedures on enrolment,
- Read the enrolment of each child on commencement and communicate any necessary information to educators,

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- Ensure that children with a medical condition have a medical management plan in place before they attend, in line with *NQS2.12 Medical Conditions Policy*, and
- Notify the Administration team if they become aware that the enrolment details of a child have changed and need to be updated or if any documentation has been changed or renewed.

It is the responsibility of educators to:

- Support families' involvement in the service and contribution to service decisions regarding the orientation of their child,
- Share information with families to support the child's transition into the service,
- Respect the culture, values and beliefs of families, and incorporate their decision-making in their child's learning and wellbeing,
- Familiarise themselves with the information supplied by the family about the child and use this to support the child to transition into the service, and
- Keep records confidential.

It is the responsibility of families to:

- Complete all documentation required by the service,
- 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,
- 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,
- Ensure all information about the child and family held by the service is kept up to date,
- Participate in an orientation before their child attends a service for the first time, and
- Give the service two weeks' notice of the cancellation of their child's enrolment.

## 5. Definitions

**Enrolment record** – A record, kept electronically or in hard copy, that contains details of the child and their parents or carers, authorisations, health information, emergency contacts, court or parenting orders, and immunisation record.

**Orientation** – A 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.

**Authorised nominee** – Under section 170 of Education and Care Services National Law, a person who has been given permission by a parent or family member to collect the child from the education and care service.

## 6. Guidelines

### a) Priority of access

River Region Early Education has a commitment to a transparent and equitable allocation of places in services with a clear set of guidelines for priority of access for children with higher

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needs. Information that helps identify need is collected through the application and enrolment process and through consultation with families, where needed.

- Children are offered places based on available vacancies, their age and stage of development and date of application unless they meet priority of access guidelines.
- Where there is a wait list for places, priority of access is given in line with the categories listed below, with category A having the highest priority, and applies to new enrolments and existing enrolments where additional days are requested.
- An enrolled child will not have their place taken away in order to offer a place to a child with a higher priority of access.

Category	Childcare places
A (in order of priority)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A child with a parent who works at River Region Early Education who needs education and care to be able to work</li> <li>2. A child at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective) and/or in out of home care or foster care</li> <li>3. A child with an existing enrolment at the service with a parent who needs education and care (additional days) to be able to work</li> <li>4. A child with a primary parent who works in a priority industry (as determined by the Board) who needs education and care to be able to work.</li> <li>5. A child with a sole parent who needs education and care to be able to work</li> <li>6. A child from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander family</li> </ol>
B (equal priority)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A child with a disability and/or additional needs</li> <li>• A child from a low-income family</li> <li>• A child with a parent who needs education and care to be able to work</li> <li>• A child with language needs (where the primary language spoken at home is not English)</li> <li>• A child who lives in the vicinity of the venue (Mobile only).</li> </ul>
C	All other children, by date of application

Category	Preschool places
A	<p>Children at least 4 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year and not enrolled or registered at a school</p> <p>Children who are at least 3 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year and are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From low-income families,</li> <li>• From Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander families,</li> <li>• With disability and/or additional needs,</li> <li>• With English language needs, or</li> </ul> <p>Children of any age who are at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective).</p>

Category	Preschool places
B	Children closest to school entry by age
C	Children in the year before they start school for a minimum of two days of preschool
D	All other children, by age with older children having priority over younger children

Priority eligibility is identified as follows:

- *Low income* is determined by at least one parent having a Health Care Card or Pension Care with the child's name listed on it.
- *At risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective)* is determined through declaration by parent, referral by relevant agencies such as Department of Communities and Justice, and/or if the child is in Out of Home Care (OOHC) or foster care.
- *With (English) language needs* is determined by a language other than English being the primary language at home.
- *Priority industry* is identified by the primary parent/carer's industry of employment and employer. Priority industry is identified by the RREE Board on an annual basis to respond to critical skills shortages in local areas.
- *Sole parent* is determined through declaration by parent and/or only a primary parent being listed on application and enrolment forms.

#### b) Wait lists

Where a family completes an application form or expression of interest for their child and there is not an available place, the child's name will be placed on a wait list.

- The wait list will be monitored and updated regularly, and places offered as they become available and in line with priority of access guidelines.
- Families will be contacted at least every six months where their child remains on the wait list to confirm the place is still needed.
- Where families do not respond to multiple requests for updates, their child's name may be removed from the wait list.

#### c) Enrolment conditions

Families can apply for a place at a service by completing an Application Form. This does not guarantee a place and families will be contacted when a place becomes available.

When a child is offered a place, an Enrolment Form must be completed. This form includes essential information and documentation that must be completed before a child can be enrolled, including the following:

##### Proof of identity

Proof of identity must show the child's name and date of birth as well as the name of at least one parent. This can be:

- Birth certificate (preferred),
- Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) History Statement and Medicare Card, or
- Letter or court order from NSW Department of Communities and Justice that includes child's name and date of birth and parent/caregiver's name.

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### Proof of immunisation

Under the Public Health Act 2010, education and care services cannot enrol a child unless approved documentation has been provided that shows the child: is fully vaccinated for their age, has a medical reason not to be vaccinated, or is on a recognised catch-up schedule if the child has fallen behind with their vaccinations. There are some conditions that allow proof to be provided within 12 weeks of enrolment – see *NQS2.70 Disease Prevention and Immunisation Policy* for more information.

Proof of immunisation must be a medical certificate or an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR):

- Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is up to date with their scheduled vaccinations, or
- 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
- Immunisation Medical Exemption Form which has been certified by an authorised immunisation provider.

Families can access an immunisation history statement via the myGov app or request one at [medicareaustralia.gov.au](http://medicareaustralia.gov.au) by registering for online services or calling 1800 653 809.

### Court orders

If there are any court orders, parenting orders, or parenting plans applying to the child in relation to the child's residence, contact with a parent or other person or the powers, duties, responsibilities or authority of any person in relation to the child, documentation must be provided. River Region Early Education is only able to legally enforce orders if documentation is provided.

### Medical conditions

If the child has a medical condition that needs to be managed and/or that requires medication, such as asthma, allergies, anaphylaxis, diabetes or epilepsy, a management plan from a registered medical practitioner must be provided and a Medical Management Plan completed and signed before the child can attend. If families do not have an existing plan from the child's doctor, the child can be enrolled and the family supported to gather the required documentation before the child attends.

### d) Enrolment records

An enrolment record must be kept for every child enrolled in a service. The enrolment record must be kept confidential, in a safe and secure place, and until the end of three years after the last date the child attended a service (or until the child is aged 25 years if it relates to incident, injury, illness or trauma).

The enrolment record must contain the following information.

#### Child and parent details

- The full name, date of birth and address of the child,
- The name, address and contact details of:
  - Each known parent of the child,
  - Any person who is to be notified of an emergency involving the child if any parent of the child cannot be immediately contacted,
  - Any person who is an authorised nominee,
  - Any person who is authorised to consent to medical treatment of, or to authorise administration of medication to, the child,

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- Any person who is authorised to authorise an educator to take the child outside the education and care service premises, and
- Any person who is authorised to authorise the education and care service to transport the child or arrange transportation of the child,
- Details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans provided to the approved provider relating to powers, duties, responsibilities or authorities of any person in relation to the child or access to the child,
- Details of any other court orders provided to the approved provider relating to the child's residence or the child's contact with a parent or other person,
- The gender of the child,
- The language used in the child's home,
- The cultural background of the child and, if applicable, the child's parents, and
- Any special considerations for the child, for example any cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional needs.

### **Authorisations**

For more information about authorisations, see *NQS7.43 Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy*.

- An authorisation, signed by a parent or a person named in the enrolment record as authorised to consent to the medical treatment of the child, for the approved provider, a nominated supervisor or an educator to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service, and transportation of the child by an ambulance service,
- If relevant, an authorisation given for the education and care service to take the child on regular excursions, and
- If relevant, an authorisation given for regular transportation of the child.

### **Health information**

For more information about health requirements, see *NQS2.12 Medical Conditions Policy*, *NQS2.70 Disease Prevention and Immunisation Policy*, and *NQS2.14 Nutrition and Food Safety Policy*.

- The name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service,
- If available, the child's Medicare number,
- Details of any specific healthcare needs of the child, including any medical condition, and allergies, including whether the child has been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis,
- Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis medical management plan or risk minimisation plan to be followed with respect to a specific healthcare need, medical condition or allergy,
- Details of any dietary restrictions for the child,
- The immunisation status of the child,
- If the approved provider or a staff member has sighted a child health record for the child, a notation to that effect, and
- In relation to NSW, certificates for immunisation or exemption for the child, as required under the NSW Public Health Act 2010.

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### e) Changing or cancelling enrolment

Once a child is enrolled and allocated placement days, their enrolment is ongoing unless cancelled with the following in place for changes from year to year:

- For preschool places, families will be asked in the second half of the year if they want to re-enrol for the following year, and
- For childcare places and the Mobile Service, places are ongoing until a request is received to cancel or change the enrolment.

To request extra or different placement days, families complete an Application Form or an Expression of Interest Form and do not have to complete a new Enrolment Form.

To cancel an enrolment, families must inform the Nominated Supervisor or a member of the Administration team in writing with at least two weeks written notice. See *NQS7.53 Fee Policy* for more information.

If the cancellation is due to dissatisfaction with the education and care provided, families are supported to provide information as part of an exit survey and in line with *NQS7.52 Child Safe Complaint Policy*.

### f) Casual places

In RREE childcare and Mobile services, individual days may become available where an enrolled child notifies the service that they will be absent, for example because of a family holiday. Other families can request to fill one or more casual places if:

- Their child has a current enrolment at any RREE service or at least one parent is an employee of RREE,
- Their child's enrolment record is up to date, including immunisation and medical information,
- They have no outstanding fees, and
- Their child participated in an orientation at that service.

Families apply for casual places through the XPLOR app and the following conditions apply:

- Priority of access may be applied in the following order:
  - Child of an RREE educator who needs the place in order to work, then
  - By date of application for the casual vacancy on that day,
- Normal daily fees apply for casual places and Child Care Subsidy will only apply if the casual place is in a service where the child has a current ongoing enrolment.
- The child permanently enrolled for the place has the priority of booking and so the casual place will be withdrawn with 24-hours' notice if the family of the permanently enrolled child notifies the service that their child will no longer be absent.
- If the casual place is no longer needed, families need to give 24-hours' notice or full fees will be charged in line with *NQS7.53 Fee Policy*.

### g) Orientation and service tours

Before application or enrolment, families can request a tour of a service at any time or participate in one provided during open days or other events. Tours take approximately 15 minutes and will include the indoor and outdoor environment, sleeping areas, toileting and nappy change facilities, and an overview of routines, play-based learning, and the RREE Philosophy.

When a child will be attending a service for the first time, the family is:



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- Provided with the *Family Handbook* during enrolment, which contains information about RREE services,
- Provided with the service or room *Welcome To* booklet, which is a child-centred view of what to expect when arriving each day at the service, and
- Offered an orientation to build relationships between the child, family and educators and to help the child and family become familiar with the environment and routine prior to beginning education and care.

Orientations are organised by Nominated Supervisors or Administration, led by Nominated Supervisors or Lead Educators, and may be individual or a group orientation when there is a cohort of children commencing attendance at the same time. This is an opportunity for families to visit the service and room, ask questions about the service, be provided with important information and for the service to gather more information about the child and their family.

*NQS6.40G Orientation Checklist* is used to ensure consistency and documentation of orientations.

Individual orientations generally:

- Take around 45 minutes,
- Include a tour of the service and the child's room, including indoor and outdoor play spaces, sleep and rest, nappy change and bathroom, and sign in and out areas,
- Include a briefing on all the key points in the *Orientation Checklist*,
- Include support to complete additional documents, including Medical Management Plans, Modified Diet Plans, and Individual Learning Plans, and
- Encourage families to ask questions.

Group orientations are a relaxed way to introduce new families and children to the service and are less formal than individual orientations. Group orientations generally:

- Take around an hour,
- Include families and children,
- Include opportunities for families to see their child's room and indoor and outdoor spaces, familiarise themselves with the arrival and departure procedure, and meet educators, and
- Can include information or presentations by other services of interest to families, for example health eating, safe sleep, hygiene and minimising illness, developmental milestones etc.

Where a family has attended a group orientation and the child has additional medical, diet or inclusion and support needs, the Nominated Supervisor will organise an individual meeting to complete any required additional documents, including Medical Management Plans, Modified Diet Plans, and Individual Learning Plans.

## 7. Relevant Legislation, Regulations and Standards

Public Health Act	
87	Responsibilities of principals of child care facilities with respect to immunisation
Education and Care Services National Law	
175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents

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<b>Education and Care Services National Regulation</b>	
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of changes to policies and procedures
177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
183	Storage of records and other documents
<b>National Quality Standards</b>	
6.1.1	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
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.
6.2.1	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
<b>Child Safe Standards</b>	
3	Families and communities are informed and involved
<b>Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcomes</b>	
<b>Early Years Learning Framework Principles</b>	
	Partnerships
<b>Early Years Learning Framework Practices</b>	
	Holistic, integrated, and interconnected approaches

## 8. Related Documents

<b>Doc #</b>	<b>Attachments</b>
NQS6.40A	Application Form
NQS6.40B	Enrolment Form
NQS6.40C	Enrolment Update Form
NQS6.40D	Authorisation to Collect Form

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Doc #	Attachments
NQS6.40E	Emergency Contact and Authorisation Form
NQS6.40F	Photography Consent Form
NQS6.40G	Orientation Checklist
NQS6.40H	Orientation Evaluation
NQS6.40I	Enrolment Checklist
NQS6.40J	Enrolment and Orientation Procedures
NQS6.40K	Preschool Expression of Interest Form Template
NQS6.40L	Expression of Interest Form Template
NQS6.40M	Enrolment Confirmation Letter Template
NQS6.40N	Preschool Enrolment Confirmation Letter Template
NQS6.40O	Email Digital Enrolment Confirmation Template

Doc #	Intersections with other key documents
	Family Handbook
	Welcome To booklet (per service/room)
	EYLF Information for Families Brochure
	RN Safe Sleeping Poster A4
NQS2.14A	Giving Your Baby the Best Start Brochure (babies aged 0-6 months),
NQS2.14B	Healthy Eating for Children Brochure
NQS1.10 A1	Family Profile
NQS5.38 A1	Inclusion and Support Form
NQS2.12B	Management of a Medical Condition Form
NQS2.14G	Individual Diet Form
NQS7.53	Fee Policy
NQS7.43	Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
NQS2.70	Disease Prevention and Immunisation Policy
NQS2.14	Nutrition and Food Safety Policy
NQS7.52	Child Safe Complaint Policy
NQS2.50	Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
NQS2.12	Medical Conditions Policy
NQS6.42	Family Involvement Policy
NQS7.60	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

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<b>Doc #</b>	<b>Intersections with other key documents</b>
NQS7.64	Photography Policy

## 9. Document Control

<b>Doc #</b>	<b>Doc Title</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
NQS6.40	Enrolment and Orientation Policy	1	September 2018	September 2020
NQS6.40	Enrolment and Orientation Policy	2	June 2020	June 2022
NQS6.40	Enrolment and Orientation Policy	3	July 2022	July 2025
NQS6.40	Enrolment and Orientation Policy (due to change in name and document format)	3a	January 2024	July 2025
NQS6.40	Enrolment and Orientation Policy	4	September 2024	September 2027