

FAMILY PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES (QUALITY AREA 6)



Part 1 - Purpose

Quality Area 6 – Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

“Partnerships with families contribute to building a strong, inclusive community within the service. Continuous, honest and open two-way communication with educators assists families to feel connected to their children’s experiences in education and care and helps them develop trust and confidence in the service. Shared decision making with families supports consistency between children’s experiences at home and at the service, helping children to feel safe, secure and supported”

Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) ACECQA (2011), p.148

Northside values the importance of family participation and open communication in its Early Childhood Centres. This is encouraged through the enrolment and orientation process, policy and procedure review, family surveys, day to day communication, educational documentation, formal and informal meetings, curriculum evenings, emails and conversations.

Part 2 - Scope

This procedure applies to all Northside’s Children’s Services Educators and Directors.

Part 3 - Policy

The National Quality Framework

Education and Services National Regulations: 75, 76, 80, 86, 111, 157, 172, 185

National Quality Standards/Elements: 1.1,1.1.4,2.1.4,2.3.3,2.3.4,3.1,6.1,6.2,7.1, 7.2, 7.3.5

Strategies

The Approved Provider will;

- Ensure that families may enter their Northside Early Childhood Centre at any time during operational hours, unless such entry would pose a risk to the safety of children and educators or breach court orders regarding access to children.
- Ensure that educators provide information to families regarding the content and operation of the educational program, in relation to their child and that a copy of the educational program (curriculum) is available at all times for viewing.
- Ensure that families have access to documents regarding the assessment of their child’s developmental needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program and assessments of their child’s progress against the Learning Outcomes of the educational program.
- Ensure that a weekly menu which accurately describes the food and beverages provided each day is displayed in an accessible place to families.
- Ensure that families are notified of any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs to their child while attending a Northside Early Childhood Centre.
- Ensure that administrative spaces are adequate for the purpose of consulting with and meeting families and for conducting private conversations
- Ensure that families are notified of changes to policies or fees and given adequate notice as per the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.

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- Ensure that a copy of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* is available for families to access at all time during hours of operation.
- Ensure the enrolment and orientation process provides families with information about the philosophy, policies, procedures and practices at the Northside Early Childhood Centre, prior to their children's first attendance at the Centre.
- Ensure the development of systems for families to provide feedback regarding enrolment and orientation process and when reviewing policies and procedures to improve processes and practices.

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure that a weekly menu which accurately describes the food and beverages provided each day is displayed in a place accessible to families.
- Ensure the development of systems for families to provide feedback regarding enrolment and orientation process and when reviewing policies and procedures to improve processes and practices are embedded in daily practice.
- Ensure that families can enter the Early Childhood Centre at any time, unless such entry would pose a risk to the safety of children/educators or breach court orders regarding access to children.
- Inform families about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints.
- Ensure that the enrolment procedures provide families with information about the philosophy, policies, procedures and practices prior to their children's first attendance at the Centre.

Educators will:

- Inform families about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints
- Be available for families at pick up and drop off times to pass on important messages and information about their child's participation in the program
- Encourage families to be involved in the early childhood centre and the program, through feedback, visiting the Centre, and providing feedback on children's emerging interests, needs and lived experiences.
- Value families as being the most important people in children's lives, seeking to share families' understandings, knowledge and preferences for their child and seeking to balance individual needs with professional practice.
- Recognize that they need to consider a range of differing strategies to build and maintain relationships with each family.
- Make educational documentation available to families.

Families will:

- Provide accurate information on enrolment and medical information forms during the enrolment process and notify educators if any information changes.
- Be invited to contribute to the quality improvement process within the Centre
- Be encouraged to attend excursions to support their children's knowledge and participation in the broader community
- Be invited to family events (open evenings, family/educator meetings and Centre celebrations)
- Receive a weekly Centre Update via email.

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Part 4 – Definitions

Northside: Northside Community Service, including all Services operated by both Community Services and Children's Services business units.

Staff member: Any person, paid or unpaid, engaging in work or representing the interests of Northside Community Service.

Service: Any Early Childhood Education Centre or activity operated by Northside Community Service.

Educators: early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings

Nominated Supervisor: The qualified staff member (an educator nominated to fill the position, or the Approved Provider) who holds a Supervisor Certificate and is identified within the Service and accompanying documentation as the Nominated Supervisor. This position holds legislative and regulatory responsibilities including but not limited to quality assurance for educational programs, supervision and safety of children, entry and exit to the premises (including excursions for children), staffing, administration of medication (both prescription and non-prescription), sleep and rest, and the preparation of food and beverages. A list of the responsibilities and requirements for this position can be found in the Related Documents section of this document.

Part 5 - Statutory Legislation and Considerations

- Being, Belonging and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. Commonwealth Government of Australia, 2009
- The Education and Care Services National Regulations

Part 6 – Related Documents

- Guide to the National Quality Standard. ACECQA (2011)
- Raising Children Network- Involving parents in school and childcare:
http://raisnignchildren.net.au/articles/involving_parents_in_school_and_childcare.html
- Community Child Care Co-operative (NSW): www.cccnsw.org.au
- ACECQA Information Sheet: Nominated Supervisor:
<http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/Information%20sheets/ACECQA%20Information%20Sheet%20-%20Nominated%20Supervisors.pdf>

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Part 8 – Revision History

Revision Date	Version No.	Change	Reference Sections
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