

## Orientation Policy

### **Rationale**

A child's initial settling in process sets the tone for their time at the centre. It can be a stressful experience for both the child and the parent. The utmost sensitivity needs to be taken to ensure this is a positive and smooth transition for the family. The orientation procedure establishes the partnerships between parents and staff. Children also have the opportunity to become familiar with the daily routine, other children and staff with the security of a parent alongside them.

### **Policy Statement**

- To encourage security, trust and a working relationship with parents and a quality environment for all children attending the centre.
- To provide a positive settling in process which is sensitively attuned to the needs of the child.
- To provide a framework for parents and staff to establish sound communication guidelines.
- To develop a clear procedure which emphasises that the needs of the child are paramount in the orientation process.
- To provide a familiarisation process that ensures the centre environment is accepting of the individual needs of the child.
- To assist parents gain an appreciation of the daily routines of the centre, its philosophy and policies.
- To encourage parents to participate and assist their child in the daily routines in order to aid the settling in process and minimise distress in the child.
- To encourage members of the extended family or other significant primary caregiver's to participate in the process.

### **Strategies and practices**

To explain the orientation process to parents when a place is offered to their child and arrange days and times that are most convenient to the parents.

All parents are required to participate in this orientation process to assist children to settle into the centre as easily as possible and to understand that participation is conditional to the enrolment process.

The time spent in these first few days is invaluable in helping children and parents to understand the routines of the centre, become familiar with the staff who will be caring for the children and minimise the stress of separation anxiety a child may feel or exhibit.

The planning of time to carry out this process cannot be emphasised enough. It is imperative that parents are encouraged to organise the time to ensure this process is successful.

The following procedure comprises the orientation process:

#### **First Orientation Meeting**

- the parent will accompany the child to the centre and stay for approximately two hours between the hours of 9.00am and 11.30am and then take their child home.
- the focus staff member will spend time with the parent filling out the Enrolment Form and Communication To Staff Form and explaining the daily routine and programme of the centre. The parent will also be shown the location and process for signing their child in, collecting notes and letters, paying fees and weekly menus and notice boards.

#### **Second Orientation Meeting**

- the parent will accompany the child and stay for approximately two hours between the hours of 11.30am and 2.30pm.
- the child and parent will have lunch at the centre and the parent will then assist their child to sleep.

If the parent leaves the room to see office staff or tour the centre it is important that they reassure their child that they will be back in a short time and that the parent is asked to keep their word about the time the child will be collected.

During the time the child and parents are at the centre, every effort will be made to ensure they are welcomed by educators and made to feel relaxed and comfortable. Educators need to ensure that as soon as a parent arrives with their child for orientation that they are greeted and encouraged to come and join in the activities.

Parents will be required to assist their child in every way:

- Toileting
- Washing hands
- Sitting with the child at meal and snack times
- Dressing and undressing at appropriate times
- Participating in activities provided
- Settling at rest time
- Helping their child become familiar with their own locker/ bed and generally explaining the centre routines.

Educators will be expected to assist parents in all these processes by providing necessary explanation of procedures and routines.

As part of the enrolment/orientation process, parents will be advised of the group their child is in and the names of the educators in their child's room.

Written communication between the Director / Administration Officer and the educators has been established to ensure educators are aware of enrolling children and are able to prepare in advance for the child's arrival.

Parents and children will be introduced to the educators in their child's room by the Director or Administration Officer.

An educator in the child's room will show the child and parent around the centre, including the child's locker, toilets, parent information pocket, fees box, notice boards and menus.

During orientation parents will be expected to complete all enrolment forms.

At the end of the orientation process, farewell the child and parent, remind them of their start date and let them know that we look forward to them joining the centre.

### **Links to other policies**

Transition Between Rooms; Transition to School

### **Related National Quality Standard**

6.1 Respectful, supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained.

### **Revision History**

**April 03** - accreditation committee general revision of entire policy; **January 04** - updated according to most current procedures; **October 09** - updated according to most current procedures; **November 11** - reviewed by Director and Office Administrator for inclusion on website; **July 13** - updated according to changes to enrolment process and immunisation requirements **November 2019** Reviewed by Director and Office Administrator