

Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Introduction

The requirements of an education and care service in the area of Collaborative partnerships with families and communities are embedded in the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations and related legislation regarding management of a business and working with a staff team and with parents who are consumers at the service.

Core references are given in each policy and the main reference list is at the back of the Manual, however the reader should consider the references that apply for their local situation.

The national Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics is an important part of this work.

Critical areas of concern

Relationships with parents are maintained with a genuine interest in the best interests of the child – in the context of the family. The curriculum policies of this service acknowledge that the parent is the child's first educator. It also acknowledge that the parent and family exist in the context of their personal and local community.

Implementation

The service philosophy guides the development and implementation of all its policies, leadership and management are no exception.

Knowledge development

Staff in this service are required to have or be working toward the relevant qualification and then continue their ongoing learning. In this area, it includes:

- Orientation
- Professional learning
- Ongoing reading, discussion and self-reflection
- External professional development

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Policy: Working with parents

Related policies and procedures

Philosophy
Inclusion
Orientation
Confidentiality of records
Dealing with complaints

Centre forms related to this policy

Enrolment form
Curriculum forms

Related Centre publications

Parent handbook
Staff Handbook

Related education

Parent orientation
Staff orientation

Review schedule

2 years or at need

Legal and professional requirements:

Education and Care Services
National Law: Section 3 Objectives, 165 and 167

Education and Care Services
National Regulations: 92-94, 102, 158, 160 - 162

National Quality Standards:
Quality Area 2, 6

Policy statement

Our service supports and respects the parenting role and the deep level of responsibility that this role carries.

We commit to working with parents closely and seek to communicate openly with them. Parents are strongly encouraged to engage in open communication with educators.

We believe and work to ensure our practices reflect that partnerships with families contribute to building a strong and inclusive community within the service.

Information with regard to family issues and personal lives will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

Rationale

The Learning Frameworks tell us that partnerships with families are based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and building on the strength of each other's knowledge.

The Learning Frameworks also tell us that partnerships are based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and build on the strength of each other's knowledge. In genuine partnerships, families and educators:

- value each other's knowledge and each other's contributions to and roles in each child's life
- communicate freely and respectfully
- share insights and perspectives
- engage in shared decision-making.

Policy: Visitors and volunteers

Related policies and procedures

Philosophy
Inclusion
Orientation
Confidentiality of records
Dealing with complaints

Centre forms related to this policy

Enrolment form
Curriculum forms

Related Centre publications

Parent handbook
Staff Handbook

Related education

Parent orientation
Staff orientation

Review schedule

2 years or at need

Legal and professional requirements:

Education and Care Services National Law: Section 3 Objectives, 165

Education and Care Services National Regulations: 145, 149, 150 - 152

National Quality Standards:
Quality Area 4, 5 and 6

Policy statement

Access to the service will be at the discretion of the manager and if involving an individual child, with the parents' consent.

The only exception to this rule would be in the case of children at risk (Refer to the policy relating to Child Protection).

All visitors to the Centre are governed by the policies and procedures of the Centre.

Namely they are required to sign the visitors book upon arrival.

Visitors will never be left unsupervised with children in care in the service unless it is the parent of that child and then the parent will only be able to be left alone with their child and no other children.

Visitors and students are supplementary to staff requirements, and will not be used to replace absent staff.

Rationale

The Early Years Learning Framework tells us that partnerships with families and the community are based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and building on the strength of each other's knowledge.



References:

Guide to the National Quality Standard (ACECQA) <http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/NQF03-Guide-to-NQS-130902.pdf>

Guide to the National Law and National Regulations (ACECQA)
http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/2014/NQF02%20Guide%20to%20ECS%20Law%20and%20Regs_web.pdf

Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework (ACECQA)
<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/ResourceCategory.aspx?pid=412&gcpid=2> (Useful Word Version and PDF)

My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care (ACECQA)
<http://www.acecqa.gov.au/ResourceCategory.aspx?pid=412&gcpid=2> (Useful Word Version and PDF)

In our reading, we used and recommend the resources in the Early Childhood Resource Hub (Australian and state governments) <http://www.ecrh.edu.au/#/>

In our general work with parents, we use and recommend the <http://raisingchildren.net.au/> which is supported by the Australian Government, Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Parenting Research Centre and the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne.

Child Australia
<http://www.childaustralia.org.au>

Disclaimer

This resource is based on the most current information available in April 2016.

In developing this resource, we have referred to legislation and regulations, sought advice from professional organisations and reviewed contemporary research. This document should be used as a guide to compliment and develop service's existing practices. Services should always check the currency of information at the time of use and consider the information in this resource in the context of their particular service.