

# Enrolment and Orientation Policy & Procedure

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## Introduction

At Learning Links, we recognise that enrolment and orientation procedures form the foundation for strong relationships between families and early education and care settings and promote a quality experience for children and their families.

This policy outlines how Learning Links ensures a successful enrolment and orientation processes to promote a smooth transition between home and our education and care service. It outlines how we:

- Apply priority of access,
  - provide information around our service operation,
  - obtain authorisations,
  - promote compliance with legislative requirements and
  - ensure a safe and secure environment for children and families.
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## Policy

- Our service ensures enrolment and orientation processes are planned and implemented to meet the needs of the child and family.
  - All legislative requirements, including the Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines are implemented within our practices.
  - This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.
  - Children are provided with support and comfort to settle into the service and establish new friendships and relationships;
  - We consult with families to assist them in separating from their child;
  - Educators receive training and support to ensure they:
    - Know the requirements of the enrolment process and the strategies to support families in introducing children to our service,
    - Have time to get to know families before children start and develop close professional relationships with families;
    - Access support from referral agencies and external professionals involved in the child's education program; and
    - Understand the requirements around custodial issues.
  - Home language, cultural background and family priorities are considered during the enrolment and orientation process.
  - Children continuing in our service will be re-enrolled before any new enrolments are taken.
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## Definitions

Priority of Access	A term defined by the NSW Department of Education Start Strong Guidelines for Community Preschools. It outlines the criteria for enrolment to the service.
Enrolment Records	Education and Care Services National Regulation states that an enrolment record must be kept with information as specified in Regulation 160 (3) for each child enrolled at the service.

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## Eligibility

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers involved in service delivery to children in Learning Links early education and care services.

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**Responsible**

Responsibilities for the policy are:

<b>Person</b>	<b>Responsible for</b>
Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators) for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program prior to their child commencing in the program.</li> <li>• Ensuring that enrolment forms comply with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162.</li> <li>• Ensuring enrolment records are stored in a safe and secure place and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 183).</li> <li>• Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or staff under the Law (Regulation 157).</li> </ul>
Nominated Supervisor / Preschool Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcoming and encouraging visits and enquiries from prospective families and children.</li> <li>• Arranging regular service tours and provide visiting families with established information.</li> <li>• Responding to all enquiries to the service.</li> <li>• Managing complex referrals, gathering and recording relevant details to support the child's application for enrolment.</li> <li>• Providing enquiries with information and referral to other supports and resources internal and external to Learning Links as required.</li> <li>• Referring families to the service website to complete the online enrolment application forms.</li> <li>• Maintaining a waiting list.</li> <li>• Providing monthly updates to the approved provider regarding the status of enrolments.</li> <li>• Maintaining an immunisation register.</li> <li>• Conducting the main enrolment intake for the new calendar year in Term 3 the year prior.</li> <li>• Coordinating the orientation program for all new enrolments.</li> </ul>
Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy.</li> <li>• Responding to enrolment enquiries and referring people to the person/s responsible, as required.</li> <li>• Ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service.</li> <li>• Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or staff under the Law (Regulation 157).</li> <li>• Implementing strategies to assist new families to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ feel welcomed;</li> <li>○ become familiar with policies and procedures;</li> <li>○ develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members.</li> <li>• Sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress with settling in to the service.</li> </ul>

Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading and complying with this policy.</li> <li>• Completing and providing documents relevant to enrolment in advance of their child commencing in the program. For example: enrolment form and birth certificate.</li> </ul>
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### Related documents

Type	Details
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010</li> <li>• Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulations 168(2) (k), 160, 161, 162, 177, 183 &lt; Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</li> <li>• Public Health Act 2010 No 127: Part 5 Division 4, Section 87</li> <li>• Health records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)</li> <li>• Family Assistance Law <a href="http://www.dss.gov.au">www.dss.gov.au</a></li> <li>• Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000, included in the Legislative Extracts – <a href="http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/childcare-benefit">www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/childcare-benefit</a></li> <li>• Public Health Act 2010 No 127 <a href="http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2010/127/full">www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2010/127/full</a></li> </ul>
Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children - Standard 5.1, 5.2</li> <li>• National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities - Standard 6.1</li> <li>• National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership – Standard 7.1 related Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks</li> <li>• National Quality Standard, Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children - Standard 5.1, 5.2</li> <li>• National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities - Standard 6.1</li> <li>• National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership – Standard 7.1</li> </ul>
Learning Links Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool Participation Policy and Procedure.</li> <li>• Immunisation Policy and Procedure.</li> <li>• Preschool Fees Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Privacy Policy</li> </ul>

### Priority of Access

- Equal priority of access is applied to children:
  - Who are at least 4 years old on or before the 31 July in that preschool year and not enrolled or registered at a school.
  - Who are at least 3 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year and from low income, and/or Aboriginal families, and/or children with a disability and additional needs.
  - With English Language needs.
  - Who are identified as being at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective).
- The priority of access criteria outlined above are of equal importance.
- Priority must be given to the priority groups outlined above before any other groups, including non-equity three-year-old children are offered enrolment.

### Enrolment

Currently enrolled children who will be continuing in the service for another year will be enrolled for the following calendar year first.

Following the re-enrolment period for returning enrolments, the remaining vacancies and vacancies arising during the year will be filled according to the Australian Government Priority of Access criteria.

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**Enrolment form** The enrolment form must be completed by each enrolling family.

Where enrolling families are not fluent in English the enrolment meeting will, wherever possible be conducted in the family's primary language.

At enrolment, parents are encouraged to provide any further information about their child that will support continuity of care between home and the service.

The enrolment record will include the following information:

**Child:**

- Full name, date of birth, gender, and address
- Name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service.
- Medicare number (if available).
- Details of any specific healthcare needs including any medical condition.
- Details of any allergies or anaphylaxis diagnosis.
- Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis/asthma/diabetic management or risk minimisation plan.
- Details of dietary restrictions
- Immunisation status - a vaccination certificate
- Cultural background
- Language used in the home.
- Any special considerations (e.g. cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional need).

**Family**

- Name, address and contact details; any emergency contacts; any person nominated by the parent to collect the child from the service;
- Any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or to authorise administration of medication to the child; any person authorised to give approval for an educator to take the child out of the service.
- Details of court orders, parenting orders or plans.
- Details of court orders relating to the child's residence or contact with a parent or other person.

**Authorisations**

- 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.
- to take the child on regular outings.
- for the children to be relocated in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Enrolment forms will be updated annually or when a family's circumstances change, to ensure information is current and correct.

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**Checking enrolment documents**

All information will be checked before enrolment is complete including a copy of the Immunisation Certificate, ensuring all enrolled children are fully immunised. Refer to the Immunisation Policy and Procedure for further details.

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**Managing exceptions to Immunisation Requirements**

Children who cannot be fully vaccinated due to a medical condition or who are on a recognised catch-up schedule will still be able to be enrolled upon presentation of the appropriate form signed by a medical practitioner.

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**Consultation with families**

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care.

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**Privacy Statement**

Learning Links is committed to respecting and preserving the confidentiality of information acquired and not releasing any such information to third parties without proper authority.

Learning Links only collects personal information that is necessary for us to provide services to people or help them access the services they need.

Families will be provided with access to Learning Links Privacy Policy on enrolment to the program.

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**Custody Arrangements**

The Education and Care Services National Law requires our service to have details of all custodial and access arrangements.

Enrolling family members are responsible for informing the Preschool Manager of custody and access arrangements on enrolment and must advise the Manager immediately of any subsequent alterations to these arrangements.

All relevant legal documentation is to be shown to the Manager and a copy will be maintained in the child's enrolment record.

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**Orientation**

The orientation and settling in period will consider and respect the needs of both families and children. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to remain with their child when delivering or collecting them for as long a period as the parent/guardian and/or educators feel may be necessary to ensure the child's wellbeing.

We will always consider the feelings and time constraints that families may have in regard to participating in orientation processes and aim to make the experience a positive and welcoming introduction to the service.

Our service will provide options for orientation to the education and care service for families which includes:

- Inviting new families to visit the service with their child at times that suit them, to familiarise families with the service prior to the child's attendance.
- Providing all new families with a conducted tour of the premises which will include introductions to other educators, children and families, and that highlights specific policies and procedures that families need to know about our service.
- Ensuring each family has access to the Family Handbook, service policies and procedures and an opportunity to have any questions answered.
- Supporting family members with the opportunity to stay with their child during the settling in process
- Ensuring all new families are encouraged to share information about their child and any concerns, doubts or anxieties they may have in regard to enrolling their child at the service.

**Document control**

This table outlines the control details for this document.

<b>Element</b>	<b>Details</b>
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