**FAMILY COMMUNICATION POLICY**

Family participation is an important part of making Waratah All Year Care a true part of the community. We believe in creating an environment that is welcoming and inclusive and supports a sense of belonging for children, families, and educators.

*‘Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children’s learning.’*

(Early Years Learning Framework, p.9)

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

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|  QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS |
| 6.1 | Supportive relationships with families  | Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.  |
| 6.1.1 | Engagement with the service  | Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in their service and contribute to service decisions.  |
| 6.1.2 | Parent views are respected  | The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child’s learning and wellbeing. |
| 6.1.3 | Families are supported  | Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing. |
| 6.2 | Collaborative partnerships | Collaborative partnerships enhance children’s inclusion, learning and wellbeing. |
| 6.2.1 | Transitions  | Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities. |
| 6.2.2 | Access and participation  | Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program. |
| 6.2.3 | Community and engagement  | The service builds relationships and engages with its community. |

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| EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS |
| 86 | Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness  |
| 87 | Incident, injury, trauma and illness record |
| 111 | Administrative space |
| 157 | Access for parents |
| 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 |
| 172 | Notification of change to policies or procedures |
| 181 | Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider |

RELATED POLICIES

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| Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy Educational Program PolicyGrievance PolicyIncident Illness Accident and Trauma Policy | Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Open Door PolicyPrivacy and Confidentiality PolicySick Children Policy |

PURPOSE

We encourage family participation and open communication within our Service. Families are invited to communicate with us face to face, through social media, storypark etc. and assist with projects in keeping with our open-door policy.

We aim to ensure open communication through the enrolment and orientation process, policy review, feedback forms, daily program, documentation, formal and informal meetings, emails, and conversations.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of Waratah All Year Care.

IMPLEMENTATION

We understand the primary influence that families have in their children’s lives, and that effective relationships between educators and families are fundamental to achieve quality outcomes for children. Community partnerships that focus on active communication, consultation, and collaboration also contribute to children’s learning and wellbeing. Positive relationships with families’ turn into a partnership as together we share a common objective and responsibility for reaching goals for children.

We will provide regular information about the Service and ongoing opportunities for families to contribute in our curriculum.

Management will ensure

* all families are welcomed and respected at our Service
* ensure information communicated with families is reliable and accurate, especially if it involves the health and safety of children, employees and visitors to the Service. (eg: Department of Health, Public Health Units).
* Families are aware of our open-door policy, unless such entry would pose a risk to the safety of children/educators or breach court orders regarding access to children.
* families are provided with a parent/family handbook during the enrolment and orientation process
* 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 is available for viewing at the education and care service.
* Families have access to their child’s developmental records outlining developmental progress against the framework, as well as their strengths, developmental needs, and interests.
* A weekly menu, which accurately describes the food and beverages provided each day, is displayed in a place accessible to parents.
* Families are notified of any incident, injury, trauma, or illness that affects their child whilst at the Service.
* The early childhood environment has an administrative space that is adequate for the purpose of consulting with parents and for conducting private conversations and meetings.
* Families are notified of changes to Service policies and National Regulations.
* The current Education and Care Services National Regulations are available for parents to access.
* The enrolment and orientation process provides families with information about the philosophy, policies, and practices of the Service.

The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will:

* Inform families about the processes for providing feedback and making complaints.
* Be available for families on arrival and pick up to communicate about their child’s day.
* Encourage families to be involved in the curriculum, providing feedback, visiting the Service, bringing in items from the home environment, and giving feedback on children’s emerging interests and developmental concerns.
* Encourage ongoing open and direct two-way communication with families to develop trust and a collaborative relationship.
* Encourage families to contribute to quality improvement progression within the Service.
* Provide families with a range of communication methods which may include emails, verbal communication, newsletters, sign-in sheets, Notice Board and notes sent home.

Families will

* Provide accurate information on enrolment and medical information forms during the enrolment process.
* Notify educators when any information changes.
* Be requested to contribute to the quality improvement progression within the Service.
* Be encouraged to attend children’s excursions to help meet required ratios and to support their children’s knowledge of and engagement in their community.
* Be invited to events held periodically to help families network and develop friendships in the local community.
* Be invited to review the centre policies, children’s goals and routines.

Source

* Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
* Australian Government. Department of Education, Skills and Employment. *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. (2009).
* Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
* Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. ~~(2017).~~ (2020)
* Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).
* Raising Children Network Australia. (2006-2019). *Effective communication with parents: professionals* <https://raisingchildren.net.au/for-professionals/working-with-parents/communicating-with-parents/communication-with-parents>
* Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
* Yorganop Indigenous Professional Support Unit *A Welcoming Yarn Engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and their Families in Education and Care Settings*. (2017). <https://childaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/A-Welcoming-Yarn-2016-Final.pdf>

REVIEW

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| POLICY REVIEWED | December 2020 | NEXT REVIEW DATE | November 2021 |
| MODIFICATIONS | * National regulations added
* additional related policies included
* further content added to points
* inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse families
* further sources added
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| POLICY REVIEWED | PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS | NEXT REVIEW DATE |
| April 2018 | * Minor terminology and grammatical adjustments made to further support understanding and implementation
* Included the list of related policies
 | April 2019 |
| October 2017 | * Updated the references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard
 | April 2018 |
| April 2017 | * Minor changes made to policy
 | April 2018 |
| November 2019 | * Added ‘Educators’ to “The Nominated Supervisor will”
* Points added (Highlighted).
* Sources checked for currency.
* Sources/references corrected, updated, and alphabetised.
 | November 2020 |