Enrolment and Orientation Policy

(Sourced: Children's Service Handbook; ACECQA Policy and Procedure Guidelines;March 2026 Education and Care Service National Regulations; Education and Care Services National Law; Kindergarten Service Agreement; Child Safe Standards; CCYP, SNAICC, National Quality Framework)

1. Policy statement

We aim to ensure that our enrolment and orientation processes meet the unique needs of each child and family. This will support them during their transition to the service, help to develop collaboratively partnerships, and promote a sense of belonging to the service community.

The service is committed to:

- Equal access for all children, based on the selection criteria set out in this policy.
- Compliance with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to the details on enrolment forms.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, parents/guardians and children who attend Snuggles Early Learning Centre.

Snuggles Early Learning Centre considers the safety, rights and best interests of children as the paramount consideration when developing policies and procedures.

2. Background

Enrolment and orientation is an exciting and emotional time for children and families. It is important to manage this time with sensitivity and support, building partnerships between families and the service. Such partnerships enable the service and families to work toward the common goal of promoting consistent quality outcomes for individual children and the service.
Immunisations are effective means of reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Early childhood education and care services have legislative responsibilities to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with acceptable immunisation documentation.

3. Legislative requirements

Relevant legislation and standards include but are limited to ;

Section/regulation	Description
2A	Paramount considerations - safety rights and best interests of children

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Section 175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents
Regulation 85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness
Regulation 86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
Regulation 88	Infectious diseases
Regulation 90	Medical conditions policy
Regulation 91	Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
Regulation 92	Medication record
Regulation 99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
Regulation 102D	Authorisation for service to transport children
Regulation 157	Access for parents
Regulation 160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider
Regulation 161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
Regulation 162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
Regulation 170-172	Policies and procedures to be followed and kept available with notifications as applicable
Regulation 177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
Regulation 181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
Regulation 183	Storage of records and other documents

4. Principles

Snuggles Early Learning Centre and Kindergarten make the decisions based on the principles as shown below:

- We value respectful and supportive relationships with our families as the basis of a smooth transition and quality outcomes for children in the service. Our quality practice enrolment and orientation processes seek to promote these relationships.
- We actively seek the input of all these associated with the service in our decision-making processes. For families, we ensure this begins at enrolment and orientation.
- Our educational program accounts for each child's knowledge, strength, ideas, culture, abilities and interests. We view enrolment and orientation as an important opportunity to begin to gather this information from the child and their family.
- We are committed to good governance and quality management. Our systems and practices ensure that our record keeping meets regulatory requirements, including in relation to confidentiality and storage.

5. Key Terms

Term	Meaning
Enrolment	An enrolment occurs when the provider has an arrangement with an individual or organization to provide education and care to a child.
Enrolment record	The approved provider must ensure that an enrolment record is kept for each child enrolled at the service,must keep an enrolment record for each child they educate and care for. The record must include: • Full name, date of birth and address of the child

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	• The name, address and contact details of: » each known parent of the child » any emergency contact » any authorised nominee » any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or administration of medication » any person authorised to give permission to the educator to take the child off the premises » any person authorised to authorise the education and care service to transport the child or arrange transportation of the child. • Details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plan • Gender of the child • Language used in the child's home • Cultural background of the child and their parents • Any special considerations for the child, such as cultural, dietary or religious requirements or additional needs. • Authorisations for: » the approved provider, nominated supervisor or an educator to seek medical treatment and/or ambulance transportation for the child • 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 of the child, including any medical conditions, allergies, or diagnosis that the child is at risk of anaphylaxis • Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis medical management plan or risk minimisation plan • Any dietary restrictions Immunisation status If the approved provider or a staff member has sighted a child health record, a notation to that effect Source: National Regulations (regulations 102, 160–162) Guide to the NQF
Orientation	Process to support the child's transition to the service, whereby families spend time at the service with the child a few times before leaving the child on their own. The time required for orientation and settling in will vary for each child and their family.

6. Procedures

6.1 General Enrolment Procedures

6.1.1 Applications

- Enrolment applications for a child to attend the centre from parents/guardians will be accepted at any time.
- Enrolment Application Forms (including a checklist of all the tasks needed on enrolment and throughout the process) are available from Management.

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- Enrolment application forms should be forwarded to Management for processing.
- Applications will be placed on a waiting list if no immediate places are available.

6.1.2 Allocation and Enrolment

- As a place becomes available Management will review the waiting list and offer places in accordance with the selection criteria of the service.
- Applicants who do not accept an offer of a place or withdraw their application will be removed from the waiting list.
- Applicants who accept an offer of a place are required to submit a $50 enrolment fee per child.
- Applicants who accept a place will be issued with the relevant Enrolment Kit this includes but is not limited to, the enrolment forms, orientation form, fee form, general information form, handbook, privacy form to complete prior to commencement. (The Medical Conditions Policy and Action Plan and Risk Management Plan may be given in the case of an identified Medical Condition)
- Upon submission of enrolment forms, and the subsequent commencement of enrolment, it is expected that parents/guardians acknowledge and will comply with the centre's policies and procedures.
- It is the Parents/Guardians responsibility to advise Management of any changes that affect the child's enrolment details (eg: contact details, allergies, custody arrangements, immunisation) or Childcare Subsidy immediately.

6.1.3. Selection Criteria

- If the required authorisations are not received during the enrolment period, the service reserves the right to work with the family to obtain these prior to enrolment or cease the enrolment.
- Places will be offered to families on the waiting list in a fair and equitable manner.
- Priority will be given to children, as stated in the Child Care Service Handbook, Section - Priority of Access
- The service will not discriminate when offering places.
- Children must meet the immunisation status for their age to be enrolled at the service.
- Places will not be offered to any family that has a pre-existing and outstanding debt with the service until a mutually agreeable payment plan is initiated.

6.1.3A. Kindergarten enrolment

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- The centre has 15 Funded 4-year-old kindergarten places and 20 Funded 3-year-old kindergarten places available daily.
- Forms for data collection (Kinder numbers) are given to families with Kinder aged Children in August and must be returned by the given due dates or places may be forfeited.
- Kinder places will be filled as children eligible for kinder return these forms – These forms will be dated in order of receipt and information of anticipated enrolments will be reported to DET as required.
- Where possible, priority will be given to those children who require their Funded Kinder year to be attended at the centre however this will be further based on the receipt of the completed enrolment form.
- Children who attend other kindergartens will be welcomed to take places that remain unfilled.
- Where possible all children offered a place will participate in the Kinder program when they attend the centre whether or not this is their primary Kindergarten however if all 4-year-old Kinder places are filled with funded kinder spots, these children may need to be enrolled in the Pre-kinder room. This can only take place where a spot is available and not taken by another 3-year-old kindergarten child.
- Parents must notify the centre ONE term in advance if they no longer require a position.
- It is the responsibility of parents to ensure paperwork is returned on time to the centre and failure to do so may in turn lead to forfeiture of the position.

6.1.4. Cessation of Enrolment

- The service requires two week's notice of a cessation of enrolment and the two week's are to be paid in advance. Should the child not attend on their last stated day, full fees will be applied dating back to the last known attendance.

6.1.5. Key Responsibilities and Authorities

The Management and staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the placement of children is conducted in a fair and equitable

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manner.

- Issuing the relevant paperwork to the applicant.
- Secure storage of the completed Enrolment Forms and relevant paperwork.
- Maintaining the confidential status of any information contained provided by parent and guardian.
- Offering places in accordance with this policy.
- Implementing this policy.
- Ensuring that parents/guardians are given a fair opportunity to contribute to the development and maintenance of all policies and procedures within the centre.
- Dealing with any questions/concerns that arise in relation to any aspect of the policy.
- Enrolment records are renewed every 2 years or sooner if required.
- Collecting Authorisation inclusive but not limited to the safe use of digital technology within the centre

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- Ensuring all enrolment information is completed and returned to the centre prior to commencement.
- Ensuring any changes to the child's information are communicated to Management as soon as possible.
- Ensuring all fees are paid up to date.
- Ensuring at least two week's notice is provided to cease a child's enrolment with the centre.
- Ensuring that they are familiar with, and abide by all policies and procedures developed and implemented by the centre.

6.2 The Orientation Procedure

The orientation of a new family to Snuggles is viewed with great importance by the staff and management at the centre and as such we try to ensure it is both a positive and informative experience.

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Although Snuggles has been designed to be an extension of your family home, everything will be 'new' to your child (and yourself) for the first few visits. Orientation is critical to the smooth transition into any new environment and it is imperative that your child feels comfortable enough for you to leave them.

Most families tour the centre before enrolment and staff encourage this prior to enrolment as it provides our new parents with the opportunity to question staff about the centre and ask all the questions that are pertinent to your child's development and happiness at the centre.

After your tour of the centre and on enrolment at Snuggles, a handbook is provided which outlines all the centers information that our parents have found helpful to have on hand. A family who is intending to enroll their child will be asked if their child has any allergies or medical conditions and if so, the staff will provide appropriate resources to that family and collect vital information from the family.

The centre also offers two free orientation sessions (of a maximum of 1.5 hours each) to allow our new enrollees (and their families) to settle in. Any additional orientation sessions can be organized at the standard ½ day rate as per the fee schedule. Prior to these orientations staff will be informed of any special needs of a child entering the service and Medication requirements as appropriate.

There is a parent information area located in each room and this provides parents with room specific information which the room leaders will inform you about during your orientation period. It is during this period that staff will also show you how to fill out the sign in and out sheet, the accident and injury register and the medication register.

Throughout the orientation process, our educators will gently introduce your child into the centre and guide them through the routines. It is often a good idea to bring a 'comfort' item (dummy/teddy) for the orientation process to assist with the transition from home to childcare.

A daily record sheet is sent home with your child every night and we encourage you to communicate to your educators information that they may need throughout the day that may help to make your child's day a happy one. Communication is essential for all families and educators.

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Educators are available to discuss your child's settling in at any stage and we encourage you to call throughout the day to check how your child is going. Educators are also available by appointment should you need a more in depth discussion and we also offer parent/educator interviews throughout the year.

A parent information library is also located at reception and policy documents, located in the foyer, are available at ant time for your perusal. The staff at Snuggles encourage your involvement in our parent group who meets regularly to discuss centre procedures and policies. Should you be interested in joining the group please inform your child's educators.

Throughout your families orientation at Snuggles please feel free to stop at reception or ask any of the educators should you require any assistance or further information as we are only too happy to help!

(For further information regarding enrolment refer to the Snuggles Enrolment Policy*)*

6.3 The Transition Process

Transitioning at Snuggles is integral to our programs and room progressions for the children.

6.3.1 Centre Room Transition

To ensure that graduation from room to room is a seamless one, we have implemented a number of flexible and progressive steps.

- Our combined room sessions ensure that children in various rooms come together on a regular bases to interact with each other and the different Carers within each room. This allows the children to familiarise themselves across all rooms and environments throughout the centre. It is also an enjoyable time for siblings to spend some time together.

- Children who are ready to graduate to the next room are guided through a tailored orientation process, where they are encouraged to spend small amounts of time in their new rooms to become familiar with the team and the children. The amounts of time are gradually increased until they are ready to make the full transition. Our Qualified Room Leaders are trained to oversee and monitor each

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individual orientation, ensuring the timings are appropriate and the progression is a smooth one for all.

We maintain our home/centre partnership throughout this process ensuring educators discuss plans with parents and keep them well informed of their child's progress throughout this process. The transition process is different for each child and as such we believe it is essential that we work together with the child, the Parent/Guardian and the Educators to ensure the very best outcome for all.

6.3.2 Specifically with regards to the Toddler to Pre-kinder Transition

The Toddler/Pre-kinder transition program is a tailored program that has developed from the identification of a particular group's needs. We have found some children ready to progress to the next room but not quite ready to do it without the support of a dedicated staff member.

To meet this need we have overlapped the age groups between the rooms and we have also identified a staff member to cater for the needs of the children in this program.

The Toddler room caters for children 18 months to 3 years and the Pre-Kinder room caters for children 2 and a half to 4 years.

We have structured an overlap of the age groups between the two rooms, from 2 and a half and 3 years, so that we can cater for those children who have out grown the toddler room, and who have shown their readiness to transition up to the Pre-kinder room. These children can now do this confidently under the guidance of a dedicated staff member maintaining a one educator to four children ratio.

We find this process to be both effective and beneficial to the development of those children who are ready to participate in the program. This process also allows for those children not yet ready to progress to the Pre-kinder a little more time with the younger children before they begin their transition process.

7. Link to other policies

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorizations Policy
- Dealing with Medical Conditions in Children Policy
- Infectious Diseases –Immunization and Health-related Exclusion Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Emergency Management Plan
- Governance and Management Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy
- Dealing with Complaints Policy

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- Safe Transportation of Children Policy
- Excursions and incursions Policy
- Delivery of children to, and Collection from, Education and Care Service Premises Policy
- Safe Use of Digital Technology and Online Environments (No personal device use)
- Fees Policy

8. Induction and ongoing training

Snuggles Early Learning Centre is committed to the ongoing training and development of our Educators. Professional development is offered to Educators regularly to support the development, health and wellbeing of children and to support our community.

9. Policy created/reviewed

last Reviewed June 2026
Review due 2027

Useful resources
Include links to useful resources that have helped inform the development of your policy.
Be mindful of the existence of any state or territory specific content.
Some examples include, but are not limited to:
• ACECQA – Enrolment and orientation information sheet
• ACECQA – Guide to the National Quality Framework
• ACECQA – Opening a new service
• Australian Government – Child care provider handbook: The enrolment process.

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