



Glenelg Community Child Care Centre

Partnerships and communication with families

Rationale and Policy Considerations

Glenelg Community Child Care Centre acknowledges that families are the primary influence (First Educator) in their children’s lives and when families and services collaborate and build respectful relationships, children have the opportunity to develop a positive sense of self and experience respectful relationships. Quality Area 6 of the National Quality Standard - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities – recognises that families can provide invaluable information about children’s interests, strengths, and abilities that assists educators to meet their needs and provide education to support their development.

Philosophy

The service’s approach to establishing partnerships and ongoing communication with families; Children’s rights and interests are paramount. In valuing and respecting families, celebrating cultural diversity, family structure and needs. We will work in partnership when supporting a child’s development. Encouraging and offering opportunities for families and important people in their child’s life to become involved in the centre. We will foster open communication creating a trusting and positive relationship between home and childcare.

Legislation and Government Requirements

- Federal and State Equal Opportunity Legislation.
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Early Childhood Services (Regulations and Standards) Act 2011
- Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Act 2011 (SA), incorporating the Education and Care Services National Law (South Australia).
- United Conventions on the Rights of the Child

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

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 supported are	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 engagement and	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.



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

Children's needs

Recognition of the important attachment relationship that exists between the family and the child; respectful and warm relationships between families and educators; educators that understand their interests, strengths and abilities; continuity between home and education and care.

Quality educators who can support their family in their parenting journey and engage in discussion to ensure their developmental, educational and care needs are met.

Families' needs

That their primary influence in their children's lives is respected and supported; opportunities to share information about their child, and make decisions about their child's experiences at the education and care service in partnership with educators; to be kept informed about their child's participation and development within the service; family needs to be met; ability to raise concerns/complaints if required. The service supports families in their parenting role by becoming a reliable source of practical information about resources and services within the local community.

Educator/Staff needs

Effective, respectful communication between educators and families builds shared understanding of each other's expectations and attitudes and builds on the strength of each other's knowledge. Respectful, honest and open two-way communication with educators assists families to feel connected with children's experience in education and care and helps them develop trust and confidence in the service.

Management needs

That families will approach management or the service educators/staff to share important information about their child or raise problems or concerns; to manage concerns or complaints about the service promptly and effectively; to encourage families to support the philosophy and principles of quality education and care.

Policy Statement



Glenelg Community Child Care Centre will provide regular information about, and on-going opportunities for families to participate and have input into the service and their child's experiences and learning. Family influence is valued, respected, and supported to enhance children's experiences in education and care. The service will actively promote shared decision making with families to support consistency between children's experiences at home and at the service. Families will be viewed as partners in providing quality education and care for children. Any family concerns will be dealt with promptly to ensure the children's interests are put first, and to support the good relationships that have been formed between the service and family members. As Glenelg Community Child Care Centre is a community based service we also have a management committee which is another way to ensure our partnership with families is strong and to involve families in decision making.

Strategies for Policy Implementation

Partnerships with families

Information is exchanged with families at arrival and departure times daily. Educators welcome and value family input and treat all suggestions or concerns with respect. The service will create a welcoming environment for all families using the service. Families will be provided with regular opportunities to contribute to curriculum decision making and provide feedback about the experiences planned for their child. Families are encouraged to speak with educators regarding any aspect of the care of their child at any time. This may be spontaneous, by telephone or by appointment. Educators will respond to families' questions, concerns and suggestions in a prompt and courteous manner. Educators will not discuss information of a confidential nature regarding any other child or family within the service. Families will be given a copy of the service's procedure for dealing with family concerns at the time of enrolment. These procedures will also be available in the services policy folder in the foyer. Families will be informed promptly and sensitively of any incidents affecting their child. Where a family's request for their child is not able to be implemented within the education and care setting due to safety and health or ethical concerns, the reasons for this will be carefully explained to the family, and an agreed outcome will be negotiated. Families will be invited to participate in the services management committee and contribute to the development and review of the service's operations, policies and procedures.

Family access

Educators will communicate with parents/guardians in a positive and supportive manner that encourages the parent-child relationship. Information with regard to family issues and personal lives will be handled confidentially. Every effort will be made to treat both parents/guardians equally. Without legal documentation, staff cannot act as though one parent is more fit than another to the legal rights of their child. Parents/guardians may visit the service at any reasonable time whilst their child is in education and care. Parents/guardians may bring other relatives to visit at convenient times that have been organised through the educator/nominated supervisor.

Family disputes

Where a child attending the service is not living with both parents/guardians, or where disputes arise in relation to responsibility for the child the following will apply: Parental responsibility remains with both parents/guardians jointly and individually except where it is altered by an order of the Family Court of Australia. In the absence of such an order the child will be released to either parent/guardian who is an authorised person to collect the child on the Enrolment Form and birth certificate. Where a non-enrolling parent cites an Order of the Family Court giving him/herself lawful access to the child, the educator/nominated supervisor will contact the enrolling parent to confirm the existence of the order and seek their direction on how to respond to the non-enrolling parent. Educators/staff will not try to interpret or act on any court order without the approval of the enrolling parent

The child will only be released into the care of the enrolling parent/guardian, or other person specifically authorised by the enrolling parent/guardian, except when child protection authorities or the police specifically direct otherwise under the provisions of the applicable child protection legislation. In the case of a parent/guardian with parental responsibility for the child arriving at the service to collect their child in a visibly



intoxicated or unfit state to drive the parent/guardian will be encouraged to contact an alternate adult to drive them and their child home or the service will offer to call a taxi. If the parent/guardian insists on taking their child, the police will be informed.

Where human life is at risk any part of the above may not be able to be complied with and in such circumstances the police will be immediately informed. In such circumstances the service staff will follow the centre's Critical Incident Management Plan. For further information on collection of children refer to Delivery and Collection of Children Policy.

Communication strategies

A service newsletter will be published regularly and will include:

- Information about current programs and special activities happening at the service;
- Highlight updated specific policies & procedures for families;
- Advise of changes to educators and other staff;
- Welcome new families;
- News from the approved provider (centre management);
- Information about changes to the operations of the service;
- Information about social events and ways in which families can participate in the service;
- Invitation to families to give input and feedback.

A Parent/Guardian Handbook will be provided to all families who use the service detailing operational information and relevant policies and procedures. A notice board will be dedicated to information for families that includes important aspects of service policies and practices; forthcoming events planned at the service; community services and resources available to families. Families may also be contacted by email, the Xplor App, letter or phone to communicate information about the service or seek feedback from the family.

The service handbook will provide general information about the service to prospective customers. Educators/staff will attend training on relationships with families and will always greet children parents/guardians and other visitors to the service in a positive and friendly manner (in person or over the telephone). Families who use the service will be surveyed at least every 12 months to receive feedback on how the service is meeting their needs and whether they would like to see any improvements to the services provided. The service's Grievances and Complaints Management policy will be followed to address any concerns raised by families about the service. The approved provider/nominated supervisor, in collaboration with the management committee, will organise social events for families and educators from time to time to encourage participation and maintain open communication.

Links to other policies

- Community Involvement
- Confidentiality and Privacy
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Educational Programs
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Equal Opportunity
- Establishing a Protective Environment
- Excursions and Transport
- Grievances and Complaints Management
- Interactions with Children

Further sources

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – Guide to the National Quality Framework www.acecqa.com.au
- Early Childhood Code of Ethics (ECA) www.eca.com.au

Approved by the Management Committee on:

Date: August 2021



Next review date: August 2023