

### Orientation Policy

#### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline ECMS's commitment to supporting children and families with a smooth transition into the education and care service to facilitate quality outcomes for children.

#### Scope

This policy applies to all ECMS staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending ECMS services.

#### Background

Meaningful, respectful, and supportive relationships with families contribute to a smooth transition and quality outcomes for children within a service. Effective orientation practices provide an opportunity for staff to get to know each child and their family. They also enable families to become familiar with the service, educator, program, and expectations.

Orientation of children at ECMS services is typically dependant on the model of service that the child will be attending. ECMS is committed to ensuring that all children and families:

- Feel welcomed into the service
- Become familiar with service policies and procedures
- Share information about their family beliefs, values, and culture
- Share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities, and needs
- Discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning.

ECMS acknowledges that every child is individual and some may need additional support to successfully transition into education and care services. Staff will work with families on an individual basis to ensure that orientation processes meet the needs of the child. The timeframe will depend on the individual needs of the child, but generally should be no more than two weeks. However, once the child begins attendance, fees will be charged accordingly but parents may choose to have their child attend shorter days to enable settling.

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## Kindergarten

Both 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten programs are aligned with the Victorian School terms. The first two days of term one are allocated as child-free days which allows educators to set up rooms and plan for children accordingly. Staff will be in contact with enrolled children and their families to specify start dates and times.

Typically, services will offer an opportunity for families to attend on the first scheduled day of kindergarten. This allows an opportunity for the staff to discuss with parents/guardians their child's likes, dislikes, interests, or any areas of concern that they may have. During this orientation process, parents/guardians will also be provided with detailed information about what needs to be brought to kindergarten.

## Early Learning Centres

Before you start the early learning and care journey, ECMS educators will spend some time with you. This is a great opportunity to share your child's likes, dislikes, interests, and concerns and to ask any questions that you may have. During the orientation process, you will be provided with detailed information about what needs to be brought to the service.

Parents/Guardians are welcome to attend the service together prior to the official enrolment date (where ratios allow). It is anticipated that this opportunity is accessed by families upon request and for a maximum of two occasions. During this time, parents remain with their child in the room to facilitate play and interaction with others. Parents/guardians **MUST** remain with their child/ren at all times and are responsible for their supervision. Both the child/ren and the parent/guardian are to sign into and out of the Visitors Book at the service to ensure that their details are captured in the unlikely event of an emergency evacuation.

Once the child begins attendance at the service, parents/guardians will be supported and encouraged to stay if required, however attendance fees will be charged.

## Supporting Children's Transition

All ECMS educators have training and experience with supporting children to settle into both kindergarten and early learning and care environments. Parents are encouraged to speak with their child's educators to individualise a plan if required.

Educators may also encourage:

- Parents/guardians may like to stay initially with their child/ren to engage in play or watch them as they play. This can reduce this as the child becomes more confident in their new environment
- Suggestions on routines for saying goodbye to your child
- Parents/guardians to leave the child for shorter periods, gradually increasing the time at the service (please note attendance fees cannot be amended for shorter days)
- If the child is anxious, parents are encouraged to acknowledge how their child feels and to always let them know that they will be collected later in the day.

Additional information on supporting children's transition is available within the ECMS Family Handbooks. These are available on our website at <https://www.ecms.org.au/resources-parents>

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Please note: 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 educators under the Law (Regulation 157).

## Roles & Responsibilities

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| Director Early Childhood Education                                | <p>Accountable for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring implementation and compliance with this policy.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Area Managers                                                     | <p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation and compliance with this policy</li> <li>Supporting Nominated Supervisors and Centre Directors in staffing needs to support effective orientation processes.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Nominated Supervisors and Centre Directors                        | <p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service</li> <li>Undertake (in conjunction with educators) orientation with the child and family</li> <li>Ensuring appropriate staffing so that orientation of children do not compromise ratios.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Employees, Volunteers, Contractors, and Student Placement Workers | <p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child</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 about settling into the service</li> <li>Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required</li> <li>Complying with the <i>ECMS Privacy Policy</i> and the <i>ECMS Confidential Information Policy</i> in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.</li> </ul> |
| Parents/Guardians                                                 | <p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay with their child as long as required during the orientation period</li> <li>Make contact with educators and carers at the service, when required</li> <li>Reading and complying with this <i>Orientation Policy</i>, <i>ECMS Enrolment Policy</i>, <i>ECMS Kindergarten Fees</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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|  | <p><i>Policy, and the ECMS Early Learning and Care Fees Policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and comply with the <i>ECMS Family Handbooks</i> available at the ECMS website <a href="http://www.ecms.org.au">www.ecms.org.au</a></li> <li>• Completing enrolment forms prior to their child's commencement at the service</li> <li>• Ensuring that all required information is provided to the service</li> <li>• Updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur.</li> </ul> |
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## Sources

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| <p>Related Policy and Procedure</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Safe Culture Policy</li> <li>• Child Safe Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Code of Conduct Policy</li> <li>• Confidential Information Policy</li> <li>• Early Learning Centre Fees Policy</li> <li>• Kindergarten Fees Policy</li> <li>• Immunisation Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Orientation Policy</li> <li>• Privacy Policy</li> <li>• Privacy Collection Statement</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p>Relevant Legislation</p>         | <p>Child Safe Standards<br/> Children, Youth, and Families Act 2005 (Vic)<br/> Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)<br/> Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)<br/> Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic): Sections 168, 169, 172, 173, and 175<br/> Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Vic): Regulations 73-76, 84,155 – 157, 158-162, 177 and 183<br/> Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)<br/> National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities<br/> Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008<br/> Public Health Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Act 2015<br/> <a href="#">No Jab, No Play website</a><br/> A New Tax System (Family Assistance and Related Measures) Act 2000<br/> Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)<br/> Working with Children Regulations 2006 (Vic)</p> |

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